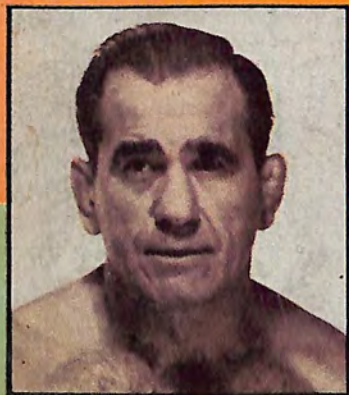


PDC ☆ NOVEMBER 1963

Big Time WRESTLING



Lou Thesz



Buddy Rogers



Ray Stevens

50c



Two Great Exclusives:

* DICK THE BRUISER
* COWBOY BOB ELLIS

NEILSONS VS. VON BRAUNERS • BRUNO SAMMARTINO • FRITZ VON ERICH
SONNY MYERS • THE SHEIK • MASKED TERROR • JOLTIN' JOE BLANCHARD

PHOTO ALBUM



★ JUDY GRABLE ★

RASSLIN' RAMBLIN'S • with the EDITOR •

Many wrestling fans will be seeing Big Time Wrestling for the first time with this issue despite the fact that BTW has been published for a little more than a year and a half.

When the first issue appeared back in December of 1961 it contained 16 pages. The second went to 24 pages and in August of 1962 it grew to 32 pages where it has remained until now.

The previous issues were pocketbook-sized and designed primarily for sale at arenas throughout the country. It has been sold in Connecticut, New York, Louisiana, Ohio, Colorado, Michigan, Nebraska, Minnesota, Missouri, Georgia, California, Florida, Indiana, West Virginia and Kentucky.

Now Big Time Wrestling will be sold at newsstands and by mail subscriptions and will be published every two months. Those of you who have been buying BTW at matches will soon see a publication entitled All Star Wrestling which will be the same as past issues of BTW. It will appear each month.

BIG TIME WRESTLING has been planned and designed to give wrestling fans the very latest in inside stories concerning the wrestlers in whom they are interested.

It will be the reception and response shown by readers which will determine just how far BTW can go—not only for this issue but for each of the succeeding issues.

Your letters will help immensely and in each issue we will print many of the comments and opinions of fans just as we have done in this issue. We pledge to the public to print the best written stories, the top action pictures and, in short, to publish the best wrestling magazine in the world.

We sincerely appreciate suggestions from readers. We can print what pleases us but if it isn't what the fans like, then we're not do-

ing our job. Let us hear from you so that we can make this a mutual undertaking. Thanks!

ALTHOUGH MANY promoters and wrestlers throughout the country have been most helpful in suggestions and encouragement for the staff of Big Time Wrestling, the Von Brauners and their manager, "Gentleman" Saul Weingeroff, have proven to be a thorn in our side. Ever since our first story on the German tag team appeared last December, Weingeroff has threatened a libel suit but to date it has been nothing more than a threat.

He has, however, knocked this magazine on TV and to promoters whom we have tried to interest in handling the magazine at their matches. We can say, thank goodness, that very, very few paid any attention to his maniacal rantings.

We won't go into details on the Von Brauner-Weingeroff situation here since we have been quite outspoken in past issues. But we would like to convey our thanks to the many who have aided this enterprise.

IN CONCLUSION we'd like to mention our Fan's Photo feature which appears on page 65 and our need for correspondents in various sections.

Many of you fans take pictures at ring-side. You put them in scrapbooks, you show them to friends and you give them to the wrestlers. We like to see them, too.

Each issue we'll print a picture taken by a fan and award a \$5 prize. If you have a picture you've taken—it doesn't have to be of professional quality, small snapshots will do—send it in. Maybe you'll win the \$5.

And if you'd like to act as a correspondent for your area let us know. We'll send details upon receipt of your letter.

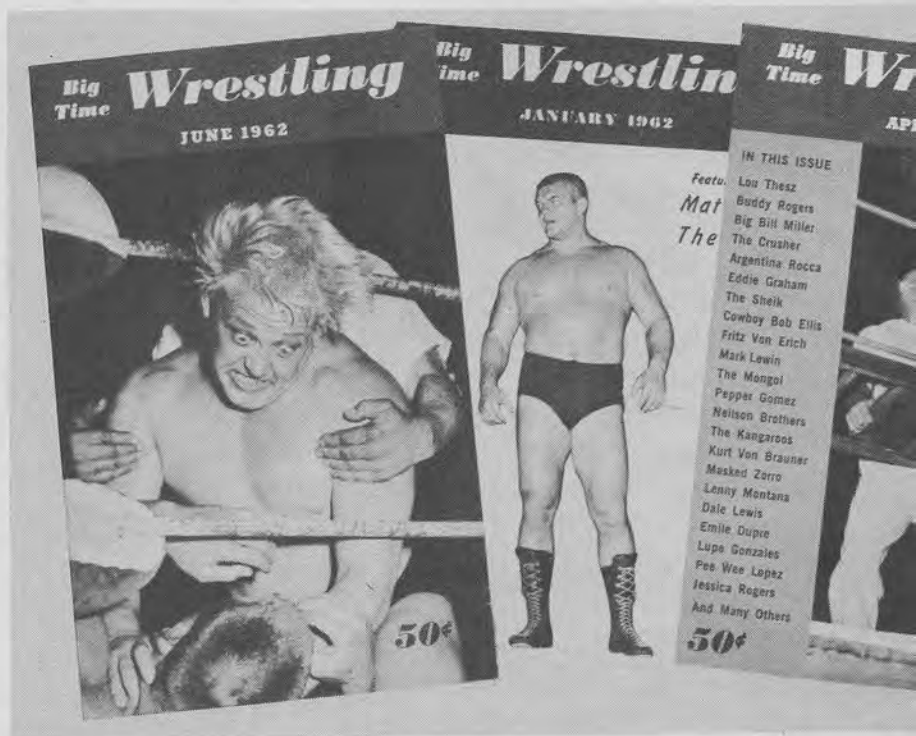
Have You Read All The Past Issues Of **BIG TIME WRESTLING?**

The Nation's No. 1 Arena Magazine

Since December of 1961 Big Time Wrestling has been sold exclusively at arenas during wrestling matches. This is the first issue of the new and larger and better BTW — increased from 32 pocket book size pages to 68 newsstand size pages.

There are still plenty of back issues on hand. Just circle the issue or issues you desire to add to your collection, send 50 cents for each one ordered, and mail to Ralph Olds Publications Inc. 3663 Ireland Drive, Indianapolis, Indiana 46236.

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NAME _____

STREET _____

CITY _____

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DECEMBER 1961

Neilsons
Von Erich
Poffo-Lubich
Melby

APRIL 1962

Von Erich
Brazil
Dupre
Bruiser

AUGUST 1962

Sheik
Borne
Starr
Rogers

DECEMBER 1962

Lord Layton
Stevens
Crusher
Von Brauners
Mark Lewin

APRIL 1963

Rocca
Mongol
Crusher
Von Erich
Lopez

JANUARY 1962

Yukon Eric
Mr. M
Match Of Year
Von Erich

MAY 1962

Barend-Maurice
(and Liberace)
Bastien Brothers
Snyder-Bruiser

SEPTEMBER 1962

Bruiser
Carpentier
DiPaolo
Scotts, Neilsons

JANUARY 1963

Bruiser
Rocca
O'Connor
Austin
Bockwinkle

MAY-JUNE 1963

Von Brauners
Stevens
Sheik
Gunkel
Lord Layton

FEBRUARY 1962

Snyder
Rocca
Bruiser
Dupre

JUNE 1962

Stevens
Jonathan
Neilsons
Midgits

OCTOBER 1962

Snyder
Brunettis
Jonathan
Miller

FEBRUARY 1963

Von Brauners
Steinborn
Thesz
Ellis
Miller

JULY 1963

Bruiser-Karras
Graham-Malenko
Stanlee Brothers
Moose Evans
6-Girl Tag Bout

MARCH 1962

Jonathan
Kowalski
Sheik
Chief Wahoo

JULY 1962

Ellis
Gagne
Blanchard
Eakins

NOVEMBER 1962

Blassie
Gomez
Gagne
Sheik

MARCH 1963

Tour Of South
Stevens-Wright
Kalmikoffs
Torres Bros.
Stern

AUGUST 1963

Neilsons
Keomuka-Matsuda
Nandor
Schmidt
Steinborn

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is not available on newstands. It is sold only at selected arenas throughout the country. If it is not available in your locality, you can receive it each month through the mail. Subscribe for it by using the blank to the right or better yet, save money by taking advantage of the combination offer—18 issues of the best in wrestling for only \$7.00.

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NAME _____

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE _____

EDITORS MAILBAG

Following are excerpts from letters received by Big Time Wrestling. Written replies will be sent if self-addressed, stamped envelopes are submitted with your inquiry or comment. Please direct all mail to Big Time Wrestling magazine, Post Office Box 26057, Indianapolis, Indiana 46226.

WANTS MATCHES ON TV Palo Alto, Calif.

A number of us would like to see wrestling at the Cow Palace on TV. I have been to about six wrestling cards at the Palace lately but it will be a long time until I'm able to go again for there are very few ways I can get there. There are so many people now who like to follow wrestling in the Bay area that it should be televised.

K. P.

Studio wrestling is, of course, televised in your area. As for the Cow Palace shows, that would be quite an undertaking. Possibly the cost is too prohibitive for a sponsor.

HE'S TIRED OF POP Huntington, W. Va.

My father gets so mad at the referee that he beats up on me. So please get some good ones for me.

S. L.

Good what? Fathers or referees!

DOESN'T LIKE TRIPE Colorado Springs, Colo.

You recently had an article about traveling to St. Louis with Dick the Bruiser. Why waste space with such tripe?

Mrs. M. L.

See the next letter.

ENJOYS TRAVEL TALK Cleveland, O.

Really enjoyed your account of going on a trip with the Bruiser. Let's have more stories like that as we fans enjoy such comments and, of course, are unable to travel ourselves with the wrestlers.

R. T.

LIKES CRUSHER, COWBOY Minneapolis, Minn.

I think your magazine is the greatest. I especially liked the stories on Crusher Lisowski and how about Cowboy Bob Ellis? Some of my friends say matches are fixed. Is this true?

T. G.

We've been around wrestlers and wrestling for a long time and all we can say that is fixed about wrestling is the time limit and number of falls.

MURPHY AND BERNARD Kensington, Calif.

I have been thinking how the villain always comes close to murder to beat the well-liked wrestler. Why not let the villains kill each other. How about a match with Skull Murphy and Brute Bernard against Fritz Von Erich and the Sheik. Murphy and Bernard are the most foul tactic, rough, unkind, unpitiful tag team in the world.

P. B.

We take it you don't care for Murphy and Bernard.

COMPETITION? WOW! Cincinnati, O.

I am sick of Bearcat Wright. Why don't they put him against some good competition?

D. G.

Despite your opinion Bearcat is one of the top wrestlers in the country. As far as competition goes, what's wrong with Lou Thesz, Dick the Bruiser, Ray Stevens and Crusher Lisowski, to name a few of his recent foes?



ONE MAN'S OPINION Cincinnati, O.

Why don't you write a story on some good wrestlers such as Buddy Rogers and leave the two-bit wrestlers such as Tony Borne out?

S. K. C.

ANOTHER MAN'S OPINION Eugene, Ore.

Your story on Tony Borne and Leo the Lion Newman was superb. I could almost really see them, you made them so real. I am quite familiar with Tony as he comes from a place near here.

L. C.

TOO MUCH FAVORITISM Indianapolis, Ind.

I was at the wrestling match the other night and I think YOU should make the wrestlers wrestle clean or not let them wrestle at all. Why didn't YOU make the Sheik leave the ring? In my book the referees show favorites, why don't they give all a fair and square chance?

M. L. H.

JUST TOO MUCH FUSS Winter Garden, Fla.

What is all the fuss about the great Eddie Graham? He ain't that good. Sure, he's a doll and has a real good personality but as a wrestler he ain't so hot anymore. I still like him, though.

Mrs. J. B.

GRAHAM A HUMANITARIAN Clearwater, Fla.

I would like to ask you to write more stories on Eddie Graham. He is the top star in Florida and should have more stories. He's a brilliant wrestler and a great humanitarian as he donates large sums of money to charities and gives freely of his valuable time to visiting hospitals. He helps the Police Athletic League with the kids and gives lectures at schools.

S. G.

So there's a couple of opinions. Take your pick.

LAUGHS AT BTW

New Orleans, La.

I enjoy your magazine but get quite a laugh out of some of the names you use as writers of your stories. Who ever dreamed up such as Bob Bork, Bob Frick, Richard Branciforte, Joan Stuff and Charles Lecclier?

B. T. K.

As far as we know Mr. and Mrs. Bork, Mr. and Mrs. Frick, Mr. and Mrs. Branciforte, Mr. and Mrs. Stuff and Mr. and Mrs. Lecclier.

WANTS HOLDS BARRED

Toledo, O.

They don't need three referees in the ring, only one if he doesn't play favorites. And why isn't the jump off the rope, the iron claw and the sleeper hold barred?

J. S.

FAVORITE TAG TEAM

Anderson, Ind.

I would like to know why Dick the Bruiser and Wilbur Snyder haven't been wrestling as a tag team. They're my favorites.

R. S.

Perhaps because they don't get along too well.

DOESN'T DIG REFEREES

Petaluma, Calif.

I'll begin by saying that Big Time Wrestling is the most up-to-date magazine I have found. In a match at the Cow Palace the Neilsons got Nick Bockwinkle in a backbreaker and the referee stood and watched them bounce Nick up and down for a couple of minutes. This is outrageous, where do they dig up these referees? Can't we have some men in there who will do their job instead of leaning on the ropes with their hands in their pockets?

D. S.



SAUL GIVES THE WORD

Atlanta, Ga.

If you can not say anything good about us, and print decent pictures, please refrain from mentioning us in your lousy rag in the future. Incidentally, everywhere we go we see fans smartening up and refusing to buy your pathetic little booklet.

Saul Weingeroff

We guess that's why one night at Jacksonville, Florida 700 copies were sold; at Indianapolis, Indiana 900, and at Atlanta, Georgia 500. Incidentally for those fans who would like to know, the Von Brauners are running as hard as they can. In July they were chased out of Texas, in August out of Georgia and currently are in North Carolina.

HE'S PULLING OUR LEG

Louisville, Ky.

I recently heard some kids talking about King Kong meeting Godzilla. Where did this match take place?

P. H.

Japan, as far as we know. It was a Japanese science-fiction movie and didn't have the first bit of karate or judo.

MATSUDA IS COLORFUL

Miami, Fla.

I think you should do an article on Hiro Matsuda, the new Southern heavyweight champ. He is one of the most colorful and limberest wrestlers we have seen for a long time.

F. R.

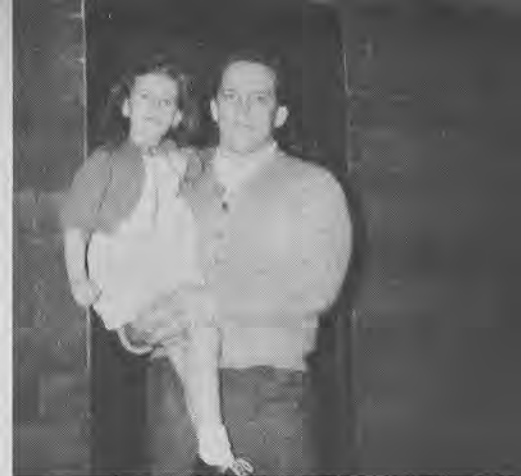
Matsuda and his tag team partner, Duke Keomuka, were the subject of a story in the August issue of Big Time Wrestling.

DEFENDS STEINBORN

St. Paul, Minn.

Just a note to let you know that I disagree with some comments made about Dick Steinborn by a fan in your April issue. This fan was wrong when he (or she) said that Steinborn was not cordial to the fans. I have had the pleasure to meet and talk with him on several occasions. I feel that he is one of the friendliest wrestlers I have ever met. He is a gentleman in every way.

J. J. S.



ANOTHER BOOSTER

St. Ansgor, Ia.

I'm writing in answer to a letter about Dick Steinborn. The person that wrote from St. Joseph, Minnesota, just didn't know our Dick. A nicer, better, more agreeable and likeable fellow I've yet to meet. When a big time wrestler like Dick will take time to write a "get well" note to a little girl he's never met, then he rates No. 1 in my book. He later met this 11½ year old, asked her for a kiss and got it. Now Dick always stops and talks with her. I'm enclosing a picture of the little girl and Dick. Does this look like a fellow that tells fans to "get lost?"

B. L. R.

THREE GREATEST

San Francisco, Calif.

I would like to see more of Emile Dupre, Steve Stanlee and Leo Nomellini, either on TV or at the Cow Palace. They are three of the greatest.

H. S.

STEVENS HAS A FAN

Richmond, Calif.

We would like to compliment BTW for its stories on Ray Stevens. We think that Ray is the best all-around wrestler in the world.

J. C.

SEEKS ADDRESS

San Francisco, Calif.

Can you give me Ray Stevens' address and where he lives because I want a picture of him. By the way, can you give me the Cow Palace name and address?

J. C.

To the first question—no. We don't know. To the second the Cow Palace's name is the Cow Palace and it's located in your town.

Big Time WRESTLING

Volume 2, Number 9

November 1963

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8 • BTW

Coming Up Next Issue

The office phone rang one afternoon late last August and it was Dick the Bruiser on the other end.

"If you're not too busy come on out to my joint and have a couple of beers and a swim," the Bruiser stated.

With the temperature in the 90s and being tired of working anyway, we readily accepted. The Bruiser's Indianapolis home, one of three he has over the country, is a tremendous layout. It's the dream bachelor domicile, in the \$50,000 class. He spends a lot of his time there since he operates a night club business in the city. The other houses he owns are in Reno, Nevada, and on the West Coast.

Before hanging up, however, we asked if we could bring our camera along and shoot some pictures of him for a "day off" type story.

He replied, "Sure, if you want to. I really liked your story on my run in with Karras. It was the best story anyone ever wrote about me."

What developed is a story that reveals the inside feelings of the man many believe is the most dangerous professional wrestler of all time. For the first time in history pictures of the Bruiser at home will be printed and you'll be able to see them in the next issue of Big Time Wrestling.

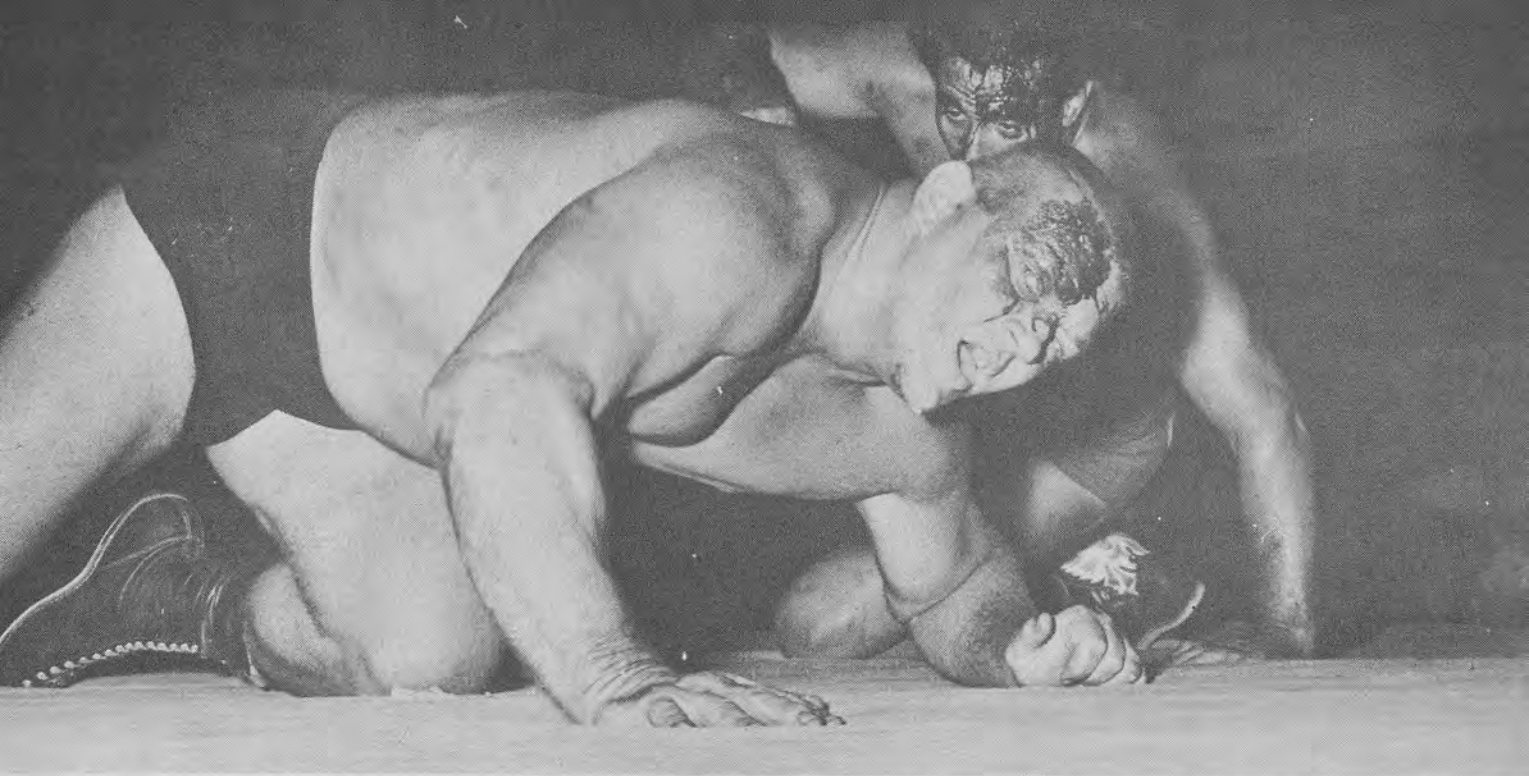
MARK LEWIN, once one of the kindest of men in the ring, is now vicious much in the order of Killer Kowalski or Jerry Graham. An exclusive story will tell why Mark has adopted the brutal tactics.

A special feature will be pictures of the wonderfully entertaining and talented midgets in action. There will be stories on Don Leo Jonathan, Bearcat Wright, Haystacks Calhoun. The Night To Remember will be of a recent St. Louis match pitting Cowboy Bob Ellis and John Paul Henning against Rip Hawk and Rock Hunter. That's just part of the lineup. There'll be many, many more. Be sure not to miss it. It's due on sale about November 1st.

★

BRUISER, COWBOY

Renew Their Bloody Feud



Both Dick the Bruiser and Cowboy Bob Ellis are bloody and battered as they renew their long feud during the summer

STORY AND PHOTOS BY RUSS LEONARD

LAST JULY DICK THE BRUISER AND COWBOY ELLIS CLASHED ONCE AGAIN AFTER ALMOST TWO YEARS OF AVOIDING EACH OTHER. WRESTLING'S GREATEST FEUD BETWEEN TWO MEN WHO INTENSELY DISLIKE EACH OTHER TOOK UP RIGHT WHERE IT LEFT OFF—A BLOOD BATH!

During 1960 and 1961 some of the greatest wrestling matches ever seen were those battles waged between Dick the Bruiser and Cowboy Bob Ellis.

They clashed more than a dozen times as promoters across the country were quick to seize wrestling's hottest feud at that time.

But then, for almost two years, their paths didn't cross until last summer and the two took up right where they left off. As usual it was a real blood bath!

A number of occurrences led to the feud between the two. Actually it's much more than a feud—each has a distinct dislike for the other.

The Bruiser regarded—and still does—Ellis as a skinny

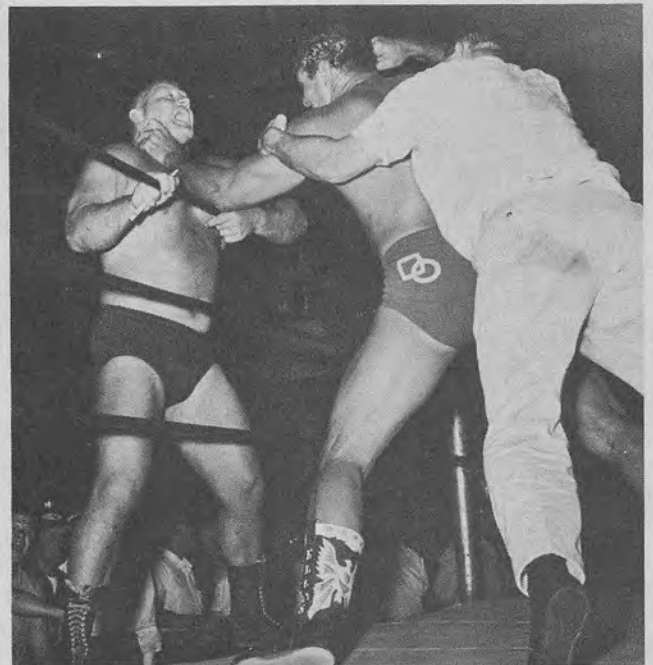
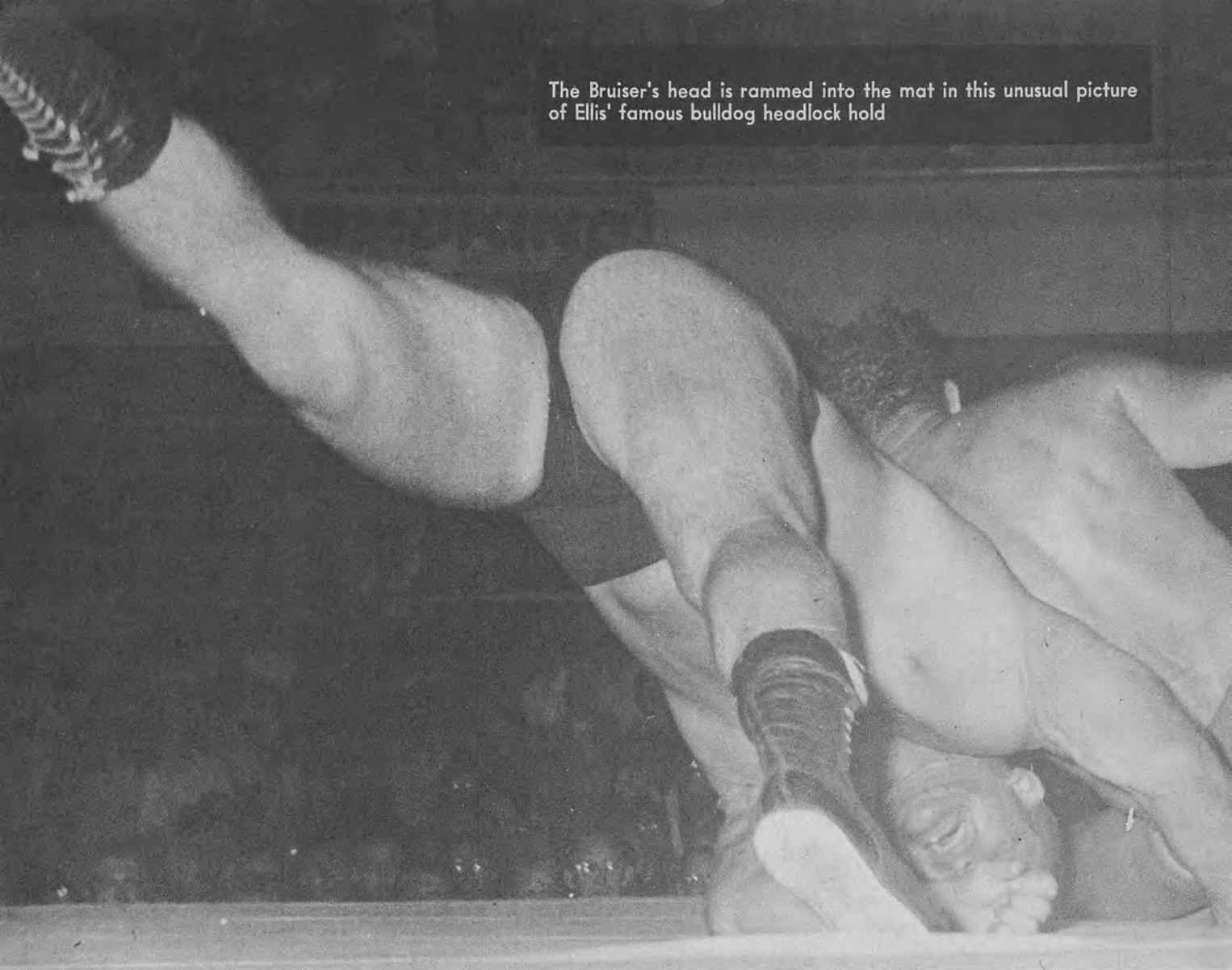
cowpoke and would take any and every opportunity to antagonize him. The matter came to a head when the Bruiser single-handedly almost destroyed a drive-in restaurant which Ellis owned in Indianapolis.

Late one night the Bruiser stopped and ordered the specialty of the place—Texas Steak Fingers. Incidentally, Ellis was on the West Coast, a fact that the Bruiser knew.

WHEN SERVED, THE BRUISER dumped the food on the driveway, verbally abused the carhop and heaved the tray through a window of the restaurant. He then strode into the kitchen, upturning tables, refrigerators, deep fryers and anything he could get his hands on.

By the time the police arrived the Bruiser had left. Two

The Bruiser's head is rammed into the mat in this unusual picture of Ellis' famous bulldog headlock hold



Ellis, whose forehead skin is weak, takes brutal beating
10 • BTW

Ellis is determined not to let the Bruiser back into the ring



days later Ellis declined to sign a complaint, remarking he would get his satisfaction later.

Whether or not Ellis is yet satisfied is difficult to tell. There's no doubt he has dealt the Bruiser untold punishment in the ring but at the same time the Bruiser has inflicted his wrath on the Cowboy. It was pretty much of a standoff, as far as we can tell, when their feud subsided in 1961.

Ellis headed for the East Coast where he became one of the brightest stars ever seen in Madison Square Garden. He headlined five straight cards that were sellouts. But while there his business in Indianapolis fell apart and Ellis recently confided to this writer that he was certain the Bruiser was behind it.

Ellis got the word that his drive-in was being used as a bookie joint for taking bets on horse races. He immediately fired his manager and within two weeks had sold the restaurant which is now being used as a used car lot.

Ellis' contention that the Bruiser was behind the affair could well be true. A year later when the Bruiser opened his Indianapolis night club, his manager was the same man who had operated Ellis' drive-in.

Last March Ellis left for a tour of Japan. A couple of nights before he embarked, he and the Bruiser were on the same card at Denver. They weren't booked against each other but the fans came close to seeing an unscheduled bout.

Then in June Ellis came looking for the Bruiser and found that promoters all through the Midwest had pen and contracts ready and waiting. The word that the feud was on again quickly spread and promoters as far away from the Midwest as New Orleans began bidding for the match.

ELLIS PROVED THAT HE WAS no "skinny cow-poke" despite having been in an automobile accident a few days earlier which left him aching and bruised all over. It was a miracle that Ellis, wrestler Dennis Hall and Big Time Wrestling Sales Director Ray Selby were not killed.

Ellis and Hall had traveled with Selby from Indianapolis to Lexington, Kentucky. After the matches, a block or so from the arena, Selby's car was struck by some kids who ran a red light at a speed estimated by the police as 50 miles an hour.

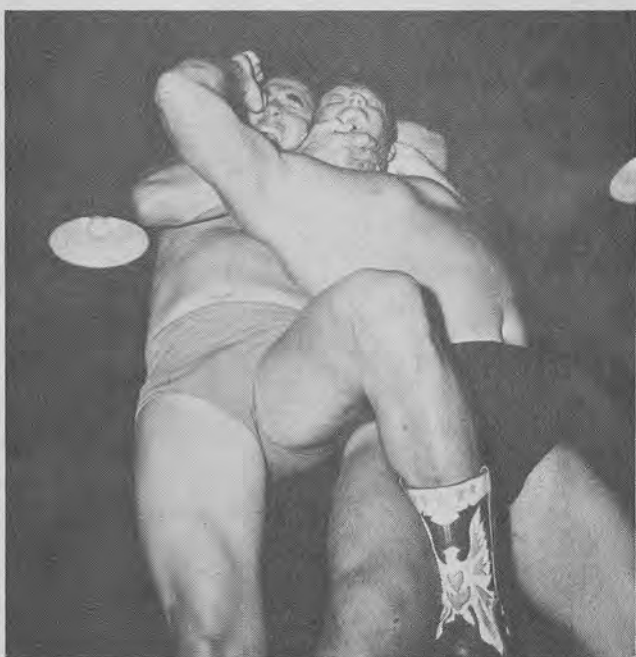
The car in which the wrestlers were riding was a total loss. They were all taken to Good Samaritan Hospital where Ellis was treated for shock, Hall for glass in an eye and Selby for three broken ribs.

Ellis' doctor recommended that he take a two weeks' rest. But Ellis would have none of it. He would have died rather than miss his booking against the Bruiser.

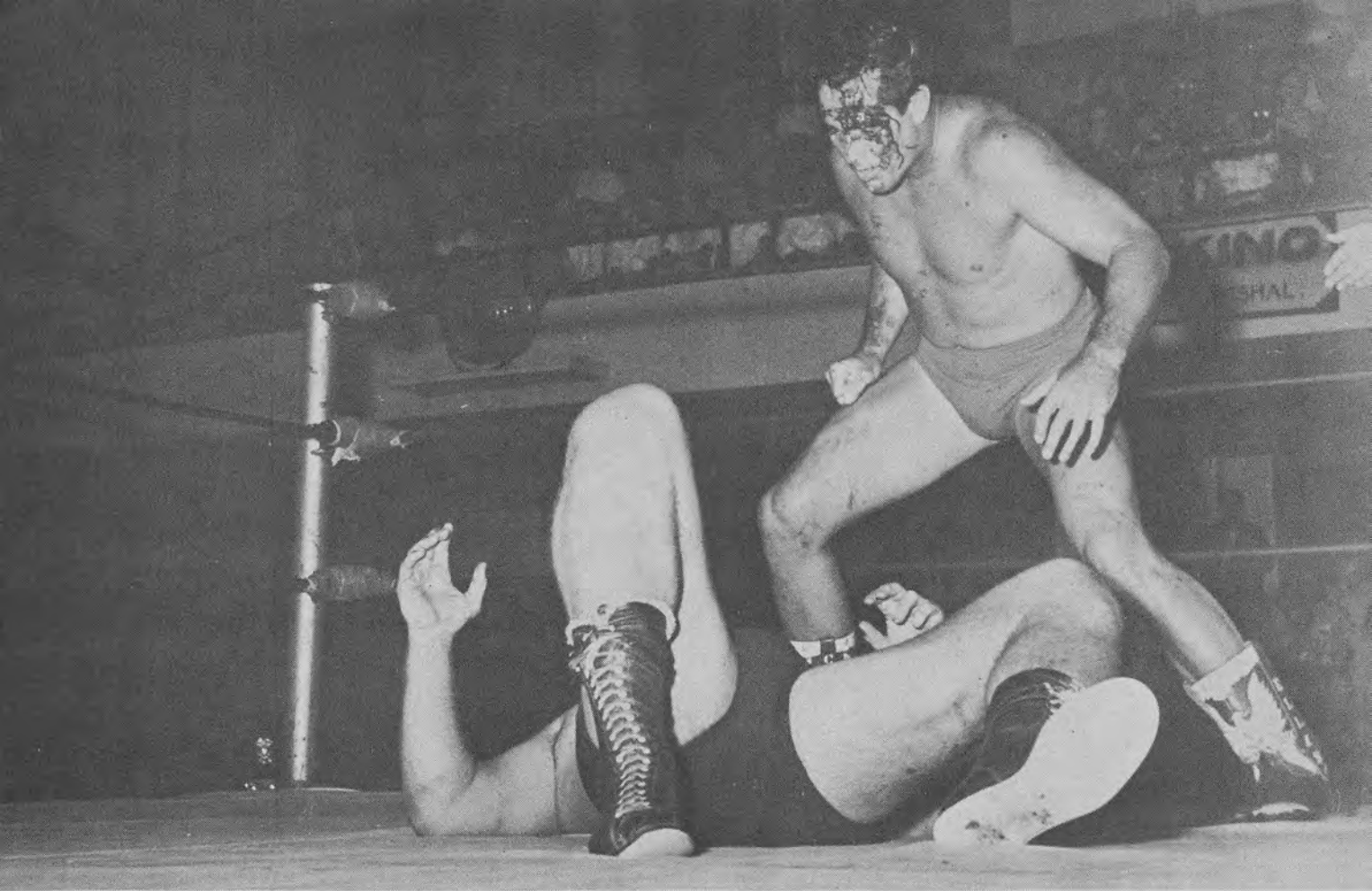
When they clashed it was just as one would expect. It was a wide open, all out battle from start to finish with each wrestler using every trick he could think of. The Bruiser used his jump from the top rope and Ellis used his bulldog headlock. When it was over they were both bloody and tired.

And each had the same comment:

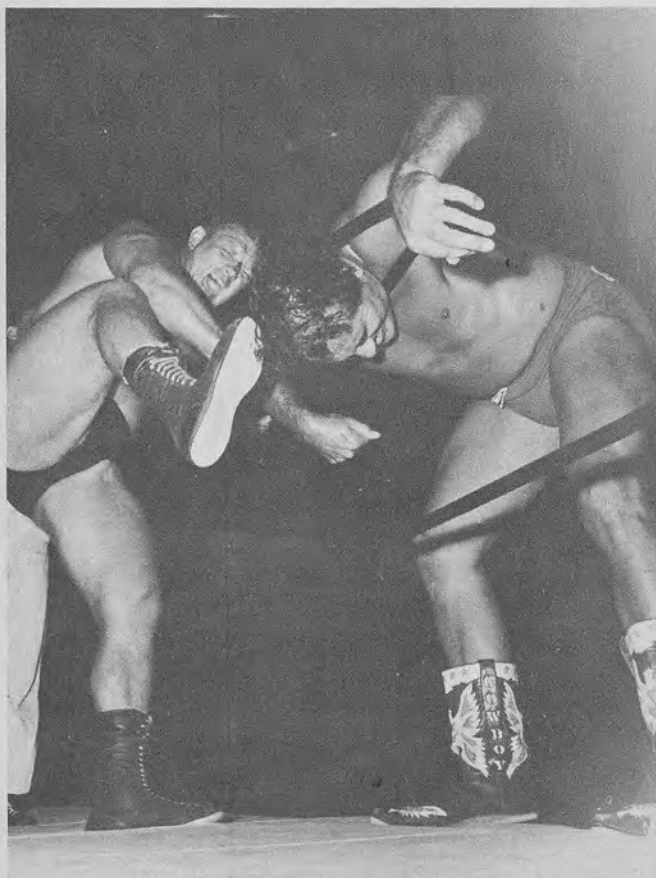
"Just wait 'til next time."



Held firmly by Ellis, the Bruiser jabs a thumb into his eye



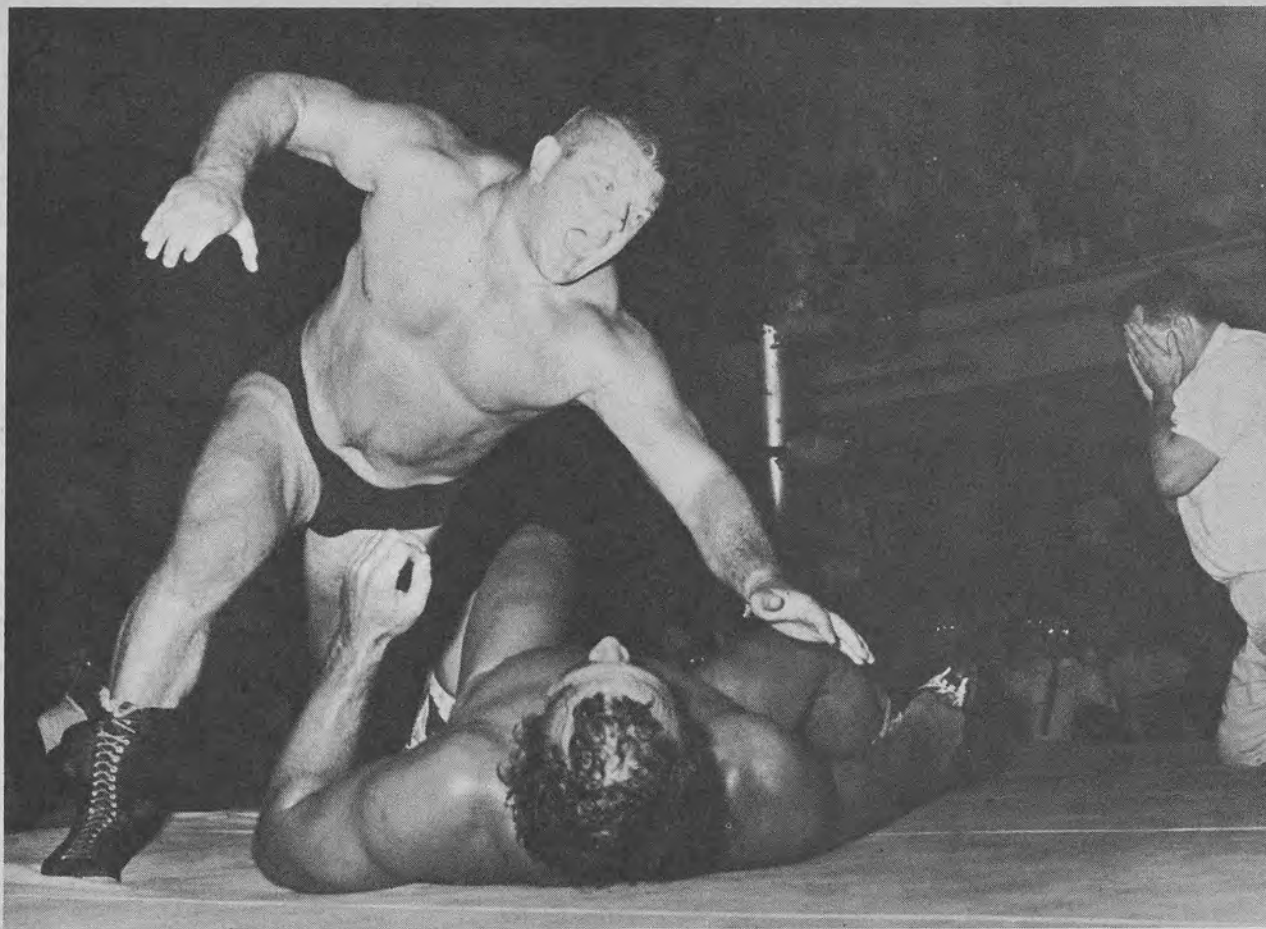
A blood-smeared Ellis towers above the fallen Bruiser. The feud between the two wrestlers dates back a number of years



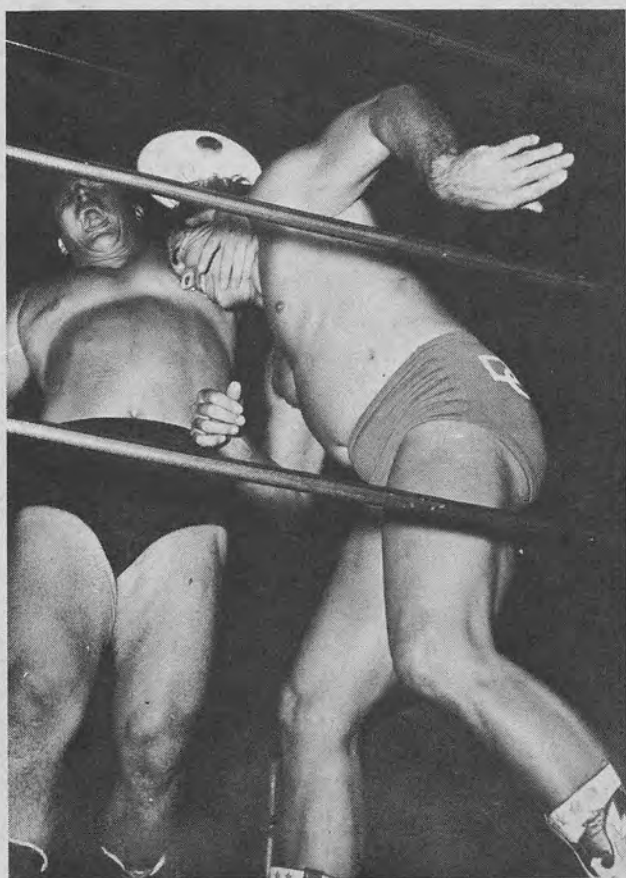
Ellis, tied helplessly in ring ropes, receives a kick to head
12 • BTW



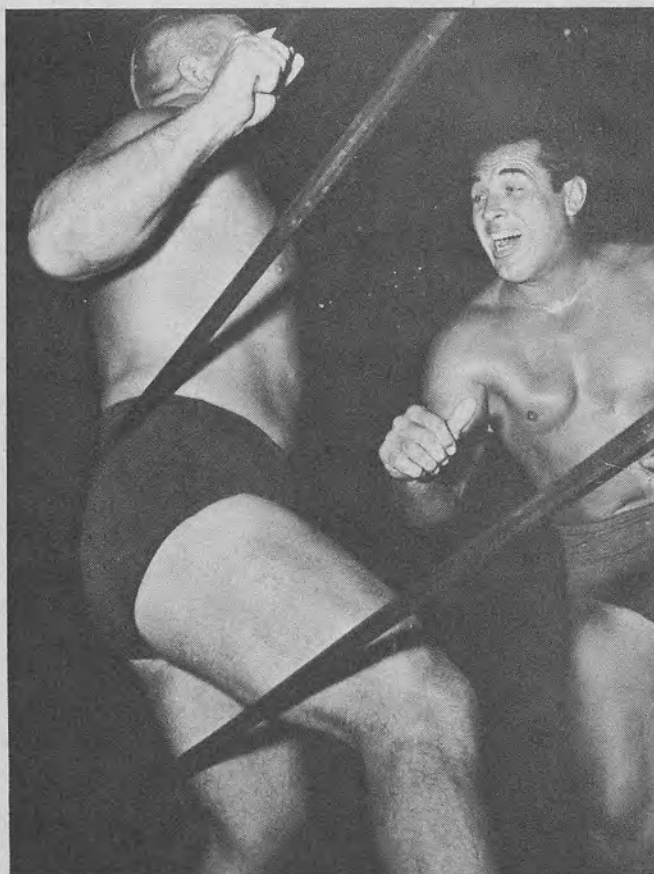
The Bruiser receives some rough treatment in the corner



The referee appears as if he can't stand the slaughter. Actually he had been hit as the two collided seconds before



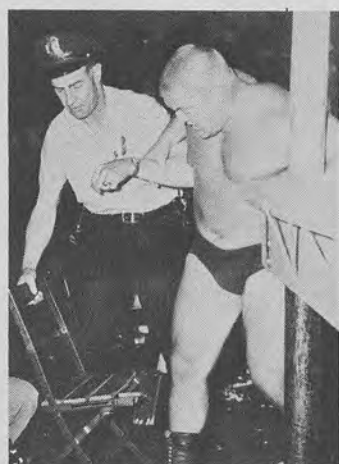
The Bruiser exhilarates, the Cowboy grimaces from punch



Ellis' all-out savage attack backs the Bruiser into the ropes



Cowboy Ellis, who looks as if he had been through a meat grinder, takes further punishment as Bruiser resorts to choking

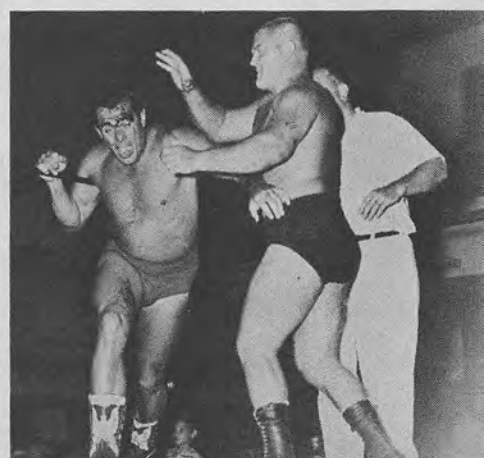


The Bruiser breaks a chair to get a piece of wood

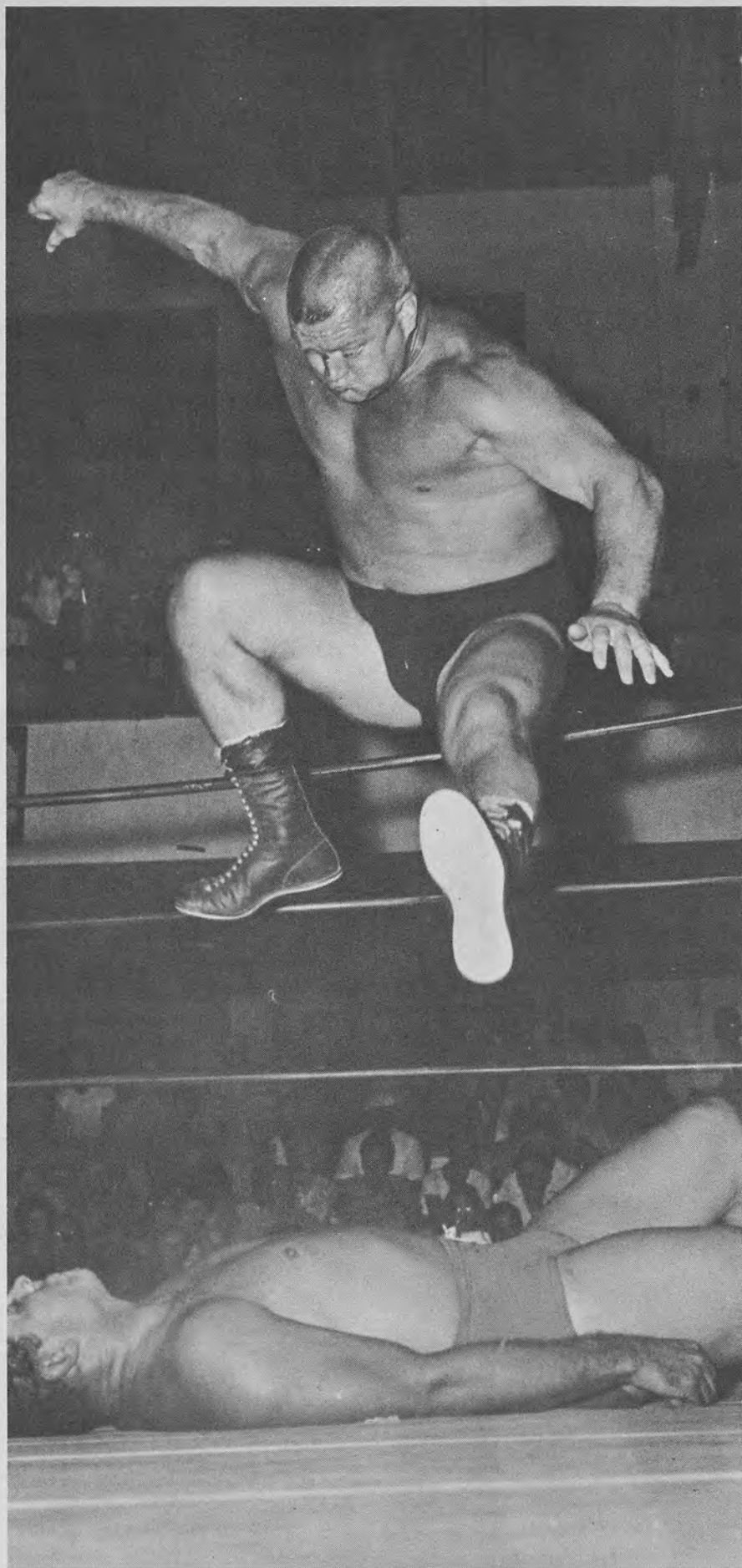
14 • BTW



Here the Bruiser reels after taking a solid right to the chin from Ellis



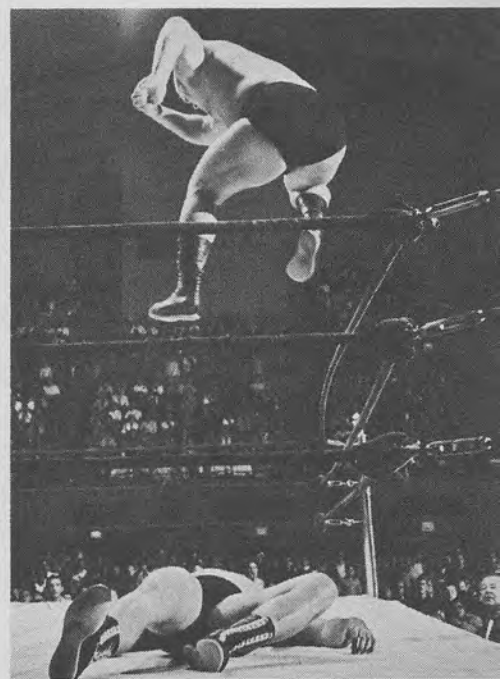
As Ellis comes sailing off ropes, the Bruiser prepares to choke him



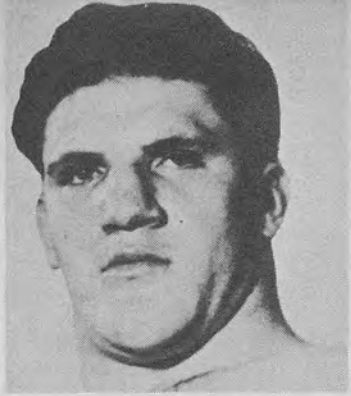
Two hundred and fifty pounds of Bruiser is about to land on the prone Ellis



During the match the Bruiser was hit with carton of milk thrown by fan



This dramatic jump off the top rope by the Bruiser occurred two years ago during torrid Ellis-Bruiser battle



BRUNO

BY BEN BILLETT

Bruno Sammartino, a real strongman in the world of wrestling, clasps Judo Jack Terry tightly as he clamps on his feared bear hug

*A heat wave from Italy
has hit the East Coast.
Fans swarm to see him in action.*

SAMMARTINO

THE MIRACLE MAN

For Bruno Sammartino, now a 265-pound mountain of wrestling strength, life has been a series of miracles.

Only a miracle could have saved him from death at the hands of the Nazi Germans when they invaded his hometown in Italy.

"Miracle" is also the only description that fits the way he built his body from a spindle-legged, skinny boy of 10 into one of the strongest, finest-conditioned wrestlers in the ring today.

He himself describes it as a "miracle" that American wrestling has offered him an opportunity not only to become a famous name in the mat ring, but also to amass wealth that a few years ago appeared far beyond his reach—an impossible goal.

"Life has been good to me," "Bruno the Great" said while drying himself from the shower after a recent match. "For me it could have ended when I was 10 — those German bullets that claimed the life of three of my brothers, a sister, an aunt and an uncle could have just as easily ended mine."

Sammartino doesn't like to be reminded of that day in Dulino, Italy when the Germans retreated through his hometown, shooting everything and everyone who crossed their path.

"They were burning all the homes as they went through," the giant wrestler recalled with just a trace of mist



Killer Kowalski shows anguish as he's caught in Sammartino's bear hug. The hold has made him almost invincible

In an effort to break out of Sammartino's bear hug Kowalski seeks the safety of the ring ropes, hoping for the referee to order the punishing hold broken

in his eyes. "My brothers, sister and myself were visiting my Uncle Giuseppe."

HIS UNCLE and older brothers went out to protect their home. Bruno, though only 10 and weighing less than 60 pounds, grabbed a rifle and followed. A few Germans fell under the fire of Bruno and other members of the family, but their small rifles were no match for the huge Nazi tanks accompanying the foot soldiers. Those huge tank guns wiped out all the villagers. When the Germans were gone only Bruno remained — a 10-year-old boy alone among charred homes and bodies of those who only minutes before had been his family and friends.

"I was knocked over by an early volley and stunned," Bruno said. "Why they neglected to finish me I'll never know. It must have been a miracle."

Hours later he was found by Allied forces who were pushing the Germans back, and was given shelter and food.

He was taken to a mission for homeless children and remained there until the war ended. Shortly after he was reunited with his parents (the Allies released them from a German concentration camp), along with a brother and sister who had not accompanied the others to Dulino that day.

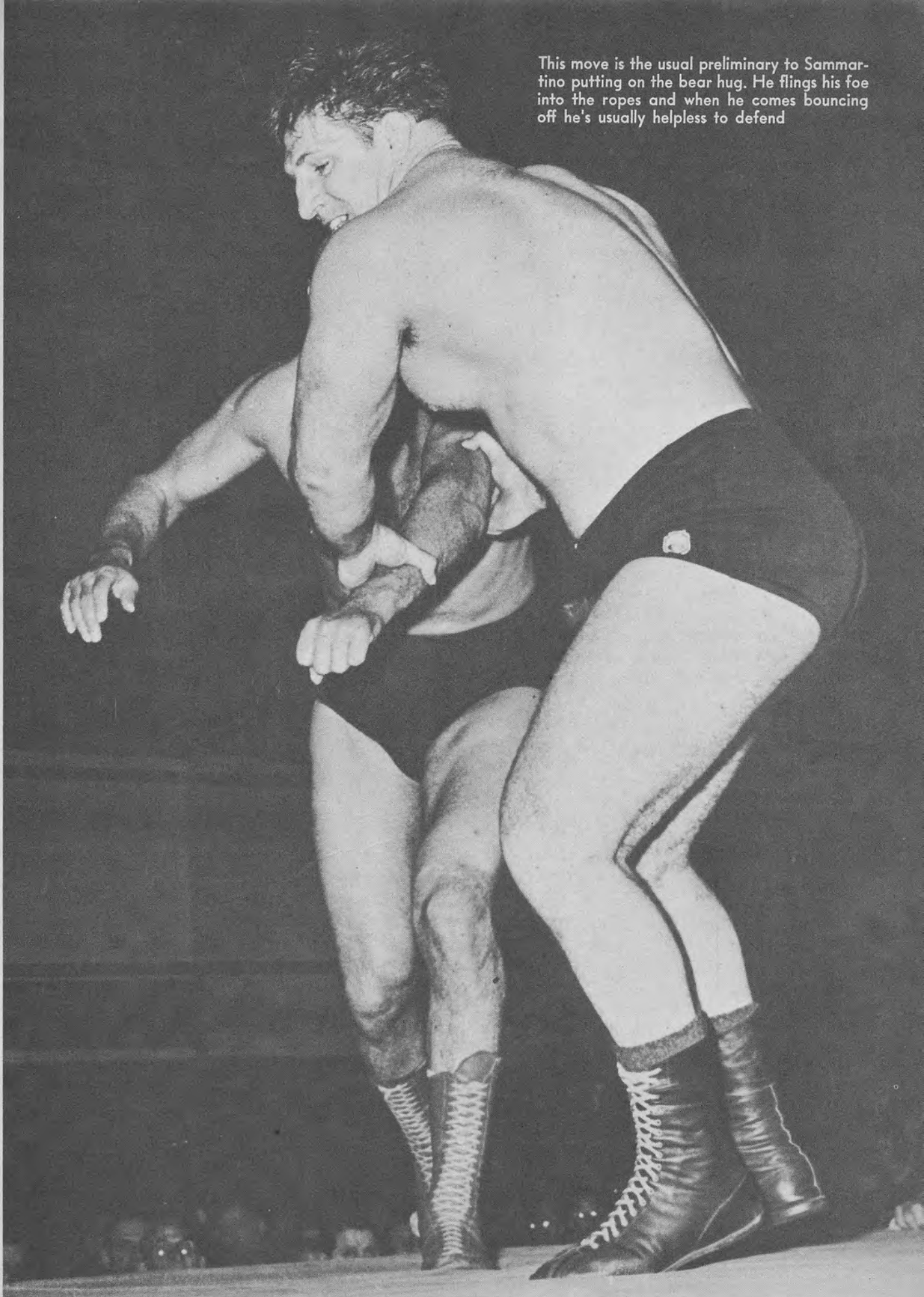
Bruno, as did others who had suffered through the war, showed the effects of starvation and lack of proper attention. When he was 15 he had grown to his manhood height (five feet, 11 inches) but weighed only 112 pounds.

That is when the second miracle in his life was started. The modest Bruno refers to it as a miracle, but his persistent devotion to body building is a more logical answer.

THINGS WERE returning to normal in the Sammartino house, but the parents were worried about their skinny son who seemed not to gain a pound, no matter what they tried.

Bruno's father was one of his section's top athletes and often went to the gymnasium to work out. One day he decided to take his son with him—a trip to which Bruno owes all of today's success. The young teen-ager was fascinated by the weightlifters. Timidly he moved forward and picked up a

This move is the usual preliminary to Sammartino putting on the bear hug. He flings his foe into the ropes and when he comes bouncing off he's usually helpless to defend



lighter weight and tested his ability to lift it. His father, standing nearby, was overjoyed at his son's interest and encouraged him to continue.

So great was the young man's interest that every day he accompanied his father to the gymnasium and worked with the weights—five and six hours a day as his strength and skill improved and the weights became heavier.

Soon his body began filling out with hard, powerful muscle. From 112 pounds his weight was increased to 150—then 175—then, after more than a year of weightlifting, he stepped on the scales and watched them spring to 200.

His father had been a better than average amateur wrestler and he could see his son as a natural in this field. At his father's suggestion, Bruno practiced holds and soon was entering and winning about every amateur wrestling contest within traveling distance. Although still green in technique compared to many of his more experienced opponents, few of them could match the tremendous strength built by hundreds of hours of weightlifting.

IT WAS only natural that, after exhausting all available competition in the amateur field, he should turn to the more rugged professional ranks.

In this, too, he was successful. It was during a match in Sicily he was spotted by American Promoter Toots Mondt who insisted that he bring that terrific strength to the more lucrative American rings.

His story since arriving in the United States (the third of Sammartino's series of miracles) has been only success piled on top of success. The "bear hug" (his favorite hold that requires only brute strength) has become something to be feared by even the most rugged, experienced opponents.

"With those arms around a man's body slowly applying pressure until surrender, there is no escape," one veteran matman said. "There are many strong men in wrestling, but I can think of no one who compares to Sammartino."

The finest in professional wrestling (in experience and strength) will not deny Bruno's power. Fellows like Bud-



Basically the clean type of wrestler, Sammartino can hold his own when forced into roughness by his opponent's tactics. This victim is Kowalski

dy Rogers, Hans Mortier, Red Bastien, Edouard Carpentier, Killer Kowalski, Yukon Eric, Dick the Bruiser and dozens of others have been unable to escape his "bear hug."

Today Bruno still is 5-11 in height, the same as back in Italy when he weighed only 112 pounds. But the heavy, muscular frame now carries 265 pounds with not an ounce of fat. It takes special tailoring to fit this 26-year-old with the 56-inch chest, 20-inch neck and 21-inch arms. And it takes a lot of tapering from that 56-inch chest to 37-inch waist, but those are the measurements.

WITH STRENGTH to lift dead weight of 750 pounds, he amazed the wrestling world in a match with Haystacks Calhoun when he lifted the 600-pound mountain of flesh above his

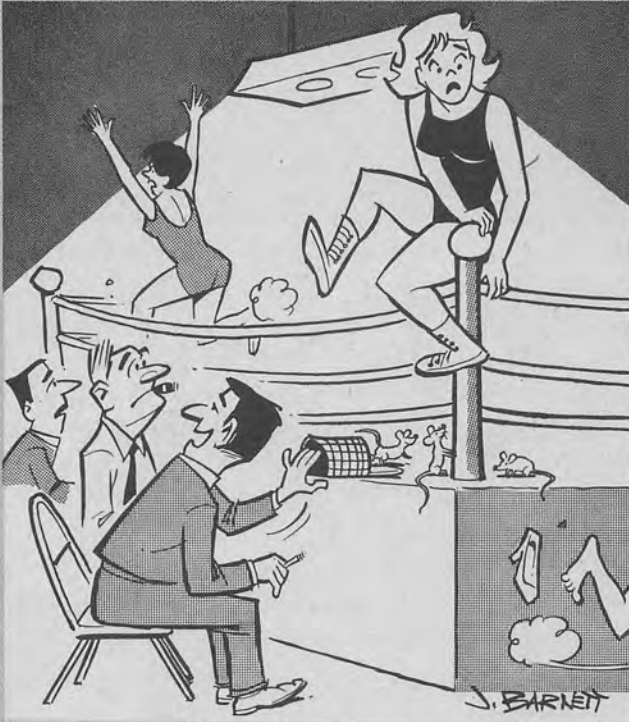
head and pounded him to the canvas. It was the only time in his career Calhoun has been thrown to the canvas from arms' length above a man's head.

Still a modest man, despite his success that has brought him fame, fortune and thousands of admiring fans, Sammartino is the first to admit he is not the world's greatest wrestler.

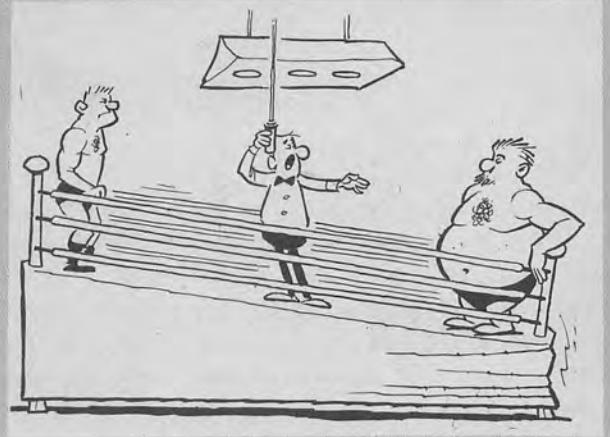
"I have learned much about wrestling, but I have much more to learn," he tells his friends. "Right now I am very strong and no one can survive my bear hug, so I win. To me that doesn't seem like so much to brag about."

To Bruno this might be true, but to his thousands of admirers and hundreds of opponents it's more than enough.

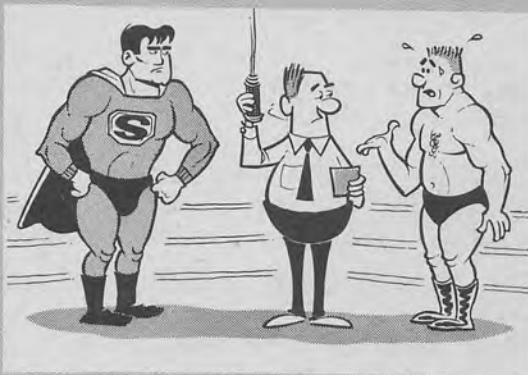
It could carry him to the world's championship. ★



"See! I told you they aren't so tough!"



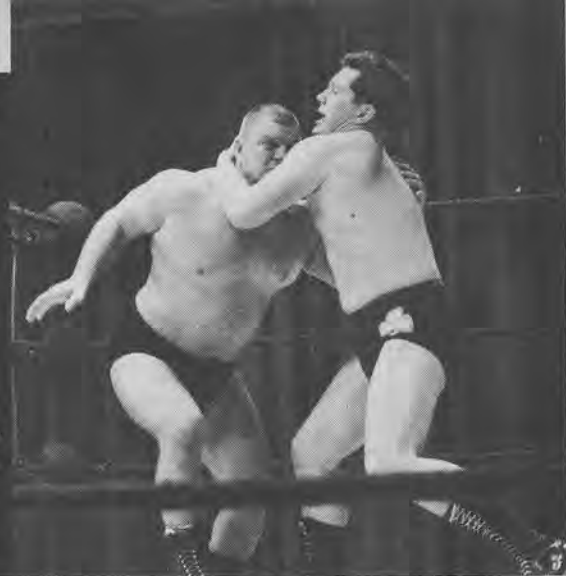
... and in this corner the new
heavyweight champion!"



"But I thought the contract said
KENT CLARK!"



"Wow! Wrestlers on the rocks!"



Les Thatcher shows his form against rugged Dick the Bruiser

To young, good-looking Les Thatcher his first appearance in the professional wrestling ring less than two years ago was a dream come true.

There was no wrestling in his background—his father is a bricklayer and he is an only child. In high school his major sports were basketball and baseball, with his football limited to sandlot play.

But his Dad and Mother were real wrestling fans and they started taking young Les to the matches when he was only 7 years old. From his first visit to a wrestling arena in his hometown at Cincinnati the one dream of the youngster was to become big enough so he could crawl through the ropes with top wrestling stars.

"I just never thought of anything else as a career," the 22-year-old youngster told a Big Time Wrestling writer recently. "Even now I'm not sure what I would like to do when I retire from the ring. The only thing I have ever really wanted to do is wrestle."

NOW TIPPING THE SCALES at 220 pounds on his 5-9½ frame, Thatcher is climbing the hill toward the top. He's big enough, moves well in the ring and possesses the drive that only comes with a lifetime of desire to be a wrestling champion.

The young man with coal black hair, brown eyes and features termed "cute" by his thousands of feminine wrestling fans, is a native of Cincinnati where he was born and reared. He was graduated from Central High School there, but never thought much about college.

"I knew what I wanted to do and the sooner I could get started the better," Thatcher explained.

He was graduated from high school in 1958, but had started wrestling as an amateur in the Cincinnati YMCA a year earlier. In March, 1961, when only 19, young Les (with his parents' blessing) went to Boston to learn the wrestling tricks from a man he considered the best—Tony Santos. Santos, a retired grappler, was a promoter and operated a school for young wrestlers in Boston.

Most of Thatcher's training came from Tony's son, Gene, who started as a professional wrestler but was forced out of the game by a badly injured knee.

"But that knee didn't prevent him from being a fine teacher," Les said. "I know I could never have learned so much from someone else."

By July 4, 1961 Santos declared young Thatcher ready for the wrestling ring and sent him to Blue Hills, Maine for his first scrap on a Fourth of July card.

His opponent was the veteran Bull Montana who scraped the canvas with the youngster before pinning his shoulders.

"Bull beat me good that night, but he also taught me something," Thatcher now recalls.

There were 14 more straight defeats along the East Coast before Les finally came up with his first victory. Since then its been about 50-50 in the won-lost columns, but his victories are getting closer together all the time and he claims: "I'm learning a little more with every match—win or lose."

He came back to the Midwest in February of last year, having stayed on the East Coast until he felt he could make his parents proud when they first witnessed a ring performance by their son. They are now his most enthusiastic fans.

While in Boston he met pretty Doris DiNatie through an introduction by a mutual friend and married her on November 19, 1961.

"She wasn't a wrestling fan before we were married, but she sure is now," Les said.

HE'S WRESTLED THEM 'ALL and "they're all tough," but he lists among his most rugged foes the Bruiser, the Sheik and Killer Kowalski.

When he has time, Les is a hot rod enthusiast and has worked for the National Hot Rod Association in the Ohio area. Drag racing is his top hobby and he is holder of several class championship trophies.

He loves to relax with a guitar and sing.

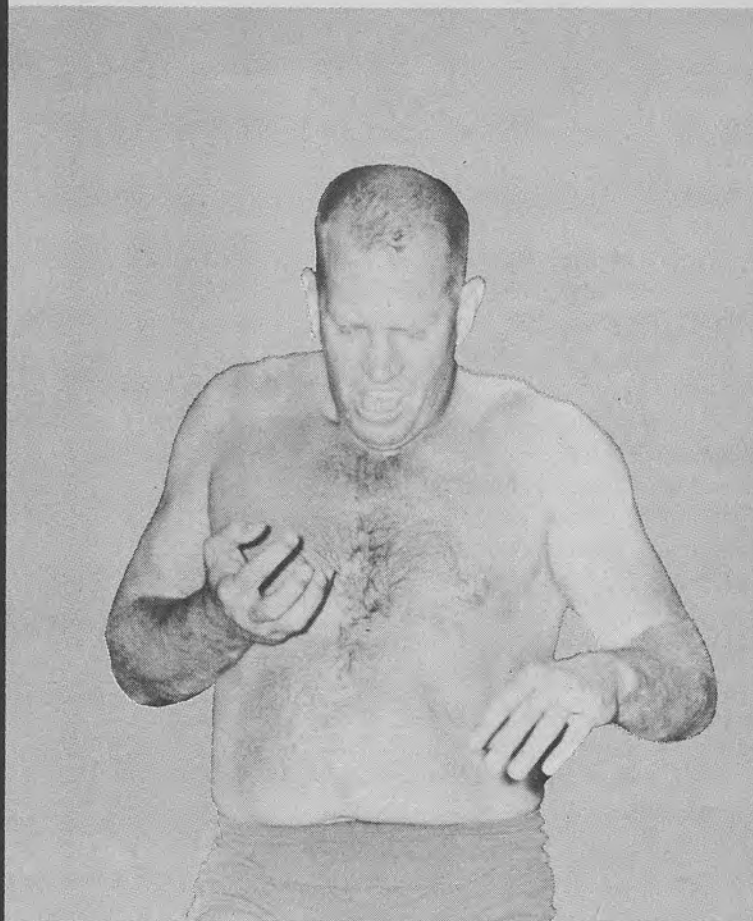
But he has never been sorry that he passed up all other careers to become a wrestler.

"I'm very much pleased with my choice," he said as he prepared to enter the arena for a match with the Mongol. "It's great—I love the sport." ★

BY WARREN COLLIER

**Fritz Von Erich knows
that his Iron Claw is his
bread and butter.**

**His right hand is worth
as much as Marlene
Dietrich's legs.**



THE IRON CLAW - - -

***INSURED
FOR ONE
MILLION
DOLLARS***

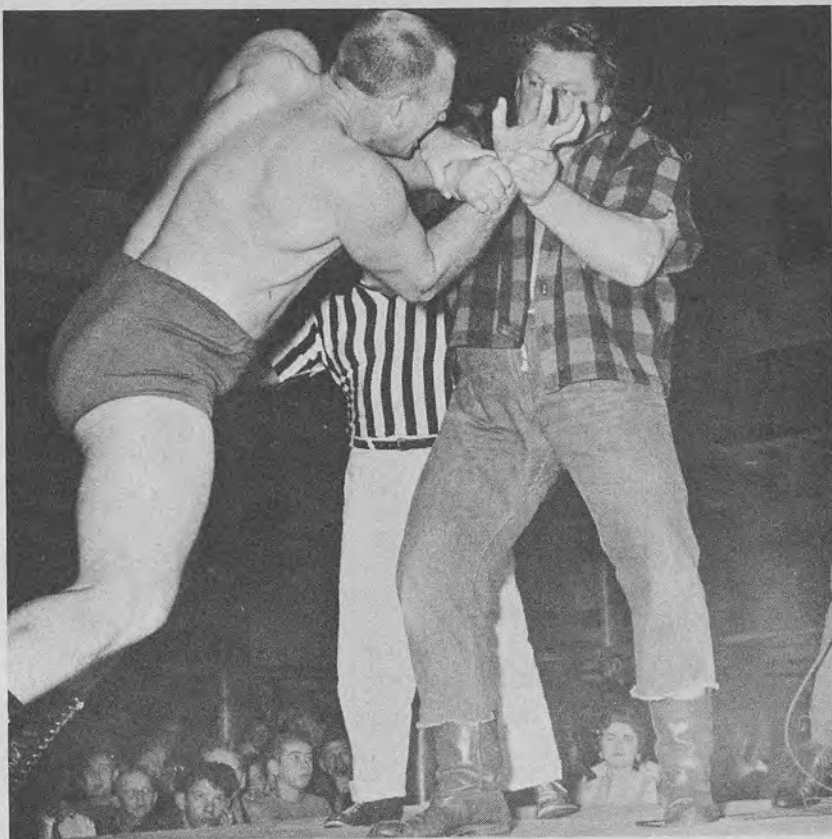


The dreadful Iron Claw, most painful, destructive hold in wrestling, has been insured for \$1 million by an international firm.

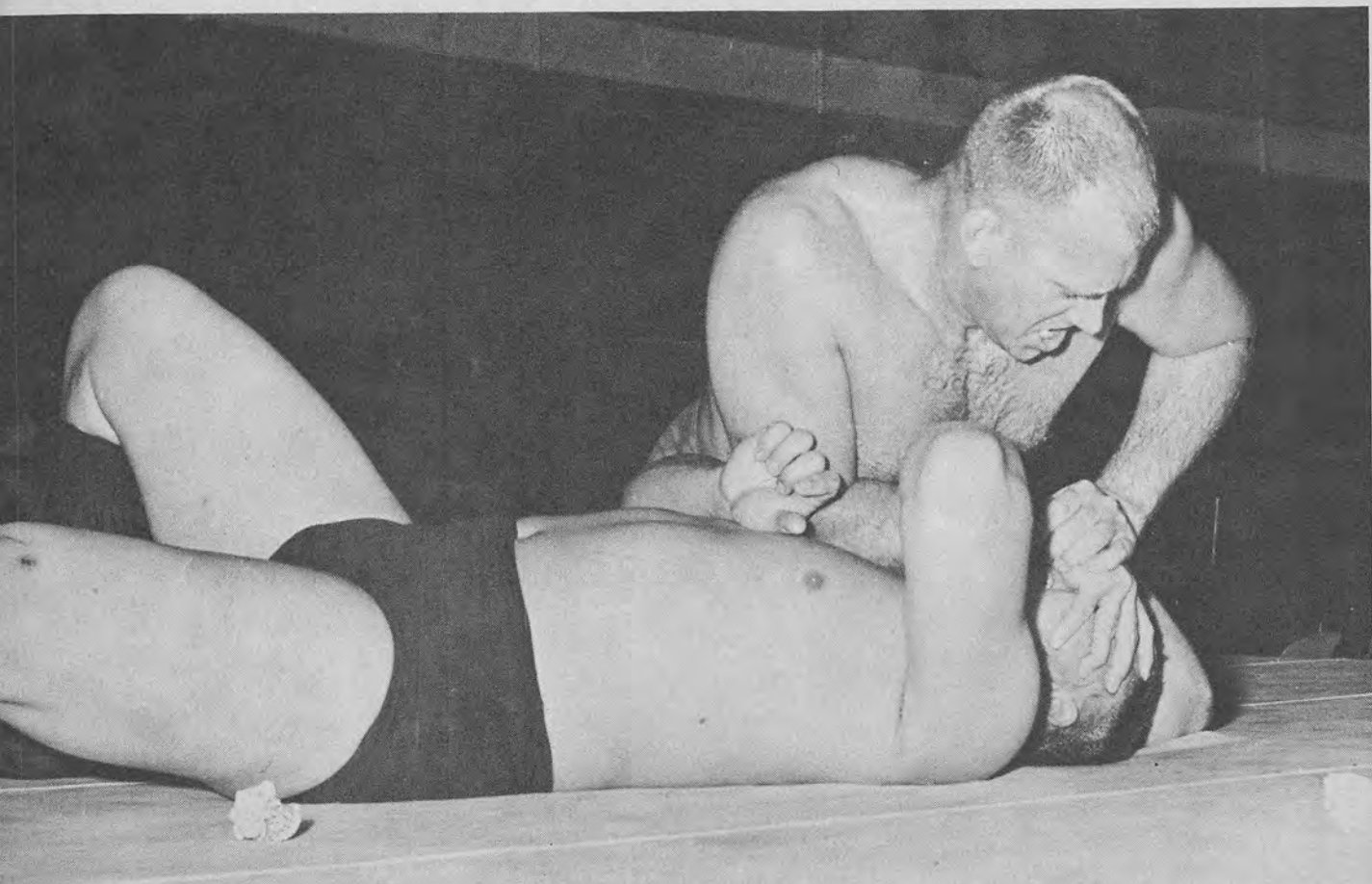
Fritz Von Erich, at the end of whose long right arm is attached a vise that looks like a hand, made the startling revelation in July while waiting to enter the ring at Olympia Stadium in Detroit.

Von Erich worked the long, talon-like fingers of his right hand that can scramble a man's brains. They were in constant motion, almost as though they were seeking something to grip and squeeze — almost as though they had a mind of their own, working separately from their owner.

"These are worth more than \$1 million to me," he said as he held that terrible Claw out for this writer to view. "It's taken me many years to acquire the strength and timing to perfect a hold that no other man in wrestling can duplicate."



Yukon Eric has come as close as anyone to withstanding Von Erich's Claw



Von Erich applies tremendous pressure to black out his opponent's senses. Often the Claw breaks skin, and draws blood



Von Erich-Yukon Eric feud wasn't always confined to ring During interview Bobo Brazil was attacked by Iron Claw

Lloyds of London must have agreed the fingers of that hand are worth \$1 million. They agreed to pay that much if ever the hand is damaged to the extent the fingers no longer can manage the strength to crush a man's head.

This writer became inquisitive. I wanted to know just how this thing worked.

"Well, I usually catch the man coming off the ropes and clamp it across his forehead, the fingers coming to rest at about the temples. Then I slowly add pressure until the opponent either surrenders or blacks out," The Claw (fast becoming the only name by which Von Erich is recognized) declared.

Still this reporter wasn't convinced.

"You mean there is enough strength in those fingers to squeeze a man into unconsciousness," he asked doubtfully.

The Claw offered a demonstration and I accepted. Now I can attest to the strength in that hand and warn others to take Von Erich's word for it — there's destruction in those fingers.

THE HUGE German wrestler

placed the hand over this writer's forehead, the thumb resting against the left temple and the forefinger and middle finger gripping the right temple. He had barely started to apply pressure when things started getting dark and I cried "enough."

"You see, and I was hardly squeezing," Von Erich exclaimed with a cruel gleam in his eye.

He seemed angered he had not been allowed to force more suffering and I had a feeling of pity for Moose Evans, the 350-pound lumberjack opponent of The Claw that night. It was he who would have to take the punishment Von Erich had not been allowed to clamp on the writer.

"But an experienced wrestler should be able to shake himself loose," I contended.

"This is not the case," the homicidal-minded German gritted. "The more they struggle the tighter the grip becomes. The more they suffer."

Von Erich discovered the hold accidentally while practicing judo at the Kukokan School at Tokyo, Japan. He grabbed a man's head and squeezed and

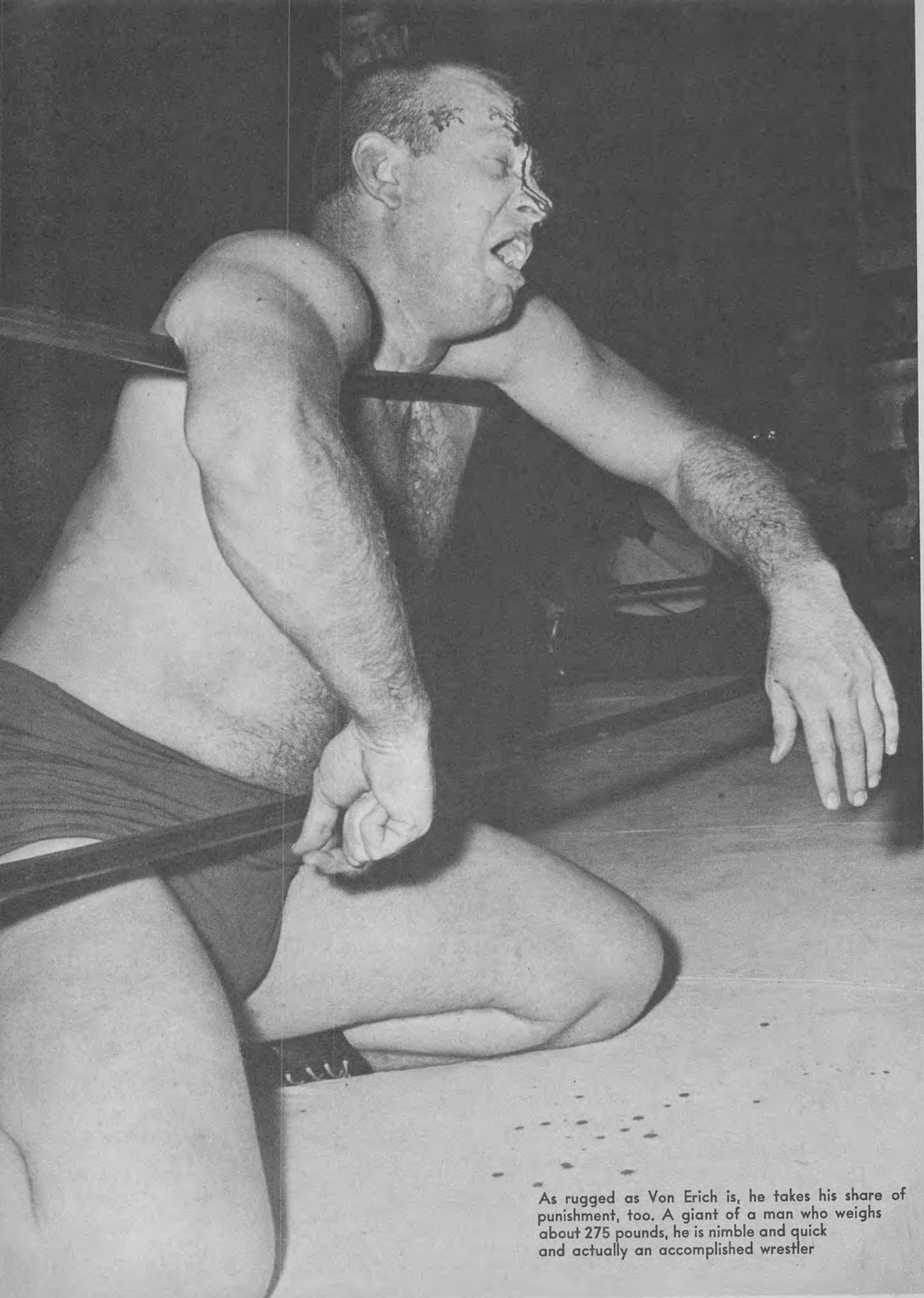
was surprised to find the opponent was helpless.

It's a variation of a nerve paralysis pressure hold practiced by the Japanese. It goes without saying that he's developed it to far surpass anything the Japs accomplished with it.

Wrestlers who have fallen victim to "The Claw" (Evans was another that night in Detroit) describe the hold as the most agonizing pain in the world. Afterward the pain, similar to an intense migraine headache, remains for days.

"Everywhere I have wrestled they have attempted to outlaw this hold. They call it illegal but they have not determined what is illegal about it. Wrestling is a sport of strength and skill and that is exactly what the Claw is—strength and skill," Fritz grinned. "Others are just jealous. All of them have attempted to duplicate the hold, but none can do it. They have neither the skill nor the strength."

WHEN ASKED about attempts to have the hold ruled illegal, Von Erich snarled and said: "I spent a year de-



As rugged as Von Erich is, he takes his share of punishment, too. A giant of a man who weighs about 275 pounds, he is nimble and quick and actually an accomplished wrestler

veloping my iron claw and nobody's going to take it away from me. They can try but how could they enforce such a ruling. If any wrestler is afraid of my claw, then he should get in the ring with someone else and not waste my time.

"As long as I wrestle I'll use the claw and I don't care if it splits their heads in half. By the time I'm through every so-called wrestler in this country is going to have a permanent headache.

"None of these guys can take it. But it's good for them. They go through fifteen minutes of hell with me and then after the match is over they feel better. It's like the guy who banged his head against the wall because it felt so good when he stopped."

In many instances when the Claw is applied to a stubborn opponent the vise-like grip is tightened until the forehead is split open, bringing a stream of blood.

In one case a promising young newcomer had his career ruined and he will spend the remainder of his days in a mental institution because he would neither surrender nor black out. Von Erich was in such a rage he refused to loosen his grip, even after the official had awarded him the fall.

"Why are they so stubborn?" Von Erich asked. "Surely they know that once the Claw has been clamped on there is no escape."

Many times wrestlers, young and old alike, have been so affected by the Claw they were forced out of action for several months.

More often than not, Von Erich is not willing to quit when the referee says enough. He can crush a skull or rip holes in the flesh with that wicked grip and he seems to delight in doing it.

"He's an animal," one opponent described him after recovering from head injuries received in a match. "He tries to kill just for the love of killing. How else can you describe him — he's an animal."

TO WHICH Von Erich sneers and looks around for another opponent upon whom he can work his wicked vengeance.

Some of the finest wrestlers in the



Many times Von Erich refuses to release Claw hold after beating his opponent

world have been caught in that iron grip and been unable to struggle loose — fellows like Cowboy Bob Ellis, Dick the Bruiser, Yukon Eric, Antonino Rocco, Larry Chene, Buddy Rogers, Johnny Valentine, Bearcat Wright, Wilbur Snyder, Bobo Brazil and a host of others.

Although he was born in Germany, Von Erich was educated in the United States. He got his B.A. degree in business administration at Southern Methodist. There he was a three-letter man in football, track and, of course, wrestling.

His football days were spent with such greats as Doak Walker, Gilbert Johnson and Kyle Rote. His devastating play at tackle brought him more "unnecessary roughness" penalties than had been charged against any player in the history of football until that time. He set a record when he was tossed out of 14 games during his college gridiron days.

Later he played with the Dallas Texans and the Baltimore Colts in profes-

sional football before choosing wrestling as his career in 1952. His cruel mind seemed to dwell on making others suffer and wrestling seemed to offer the best opportunity. He could enjoy agony of others and make money doing it.

During his youth he had been trained by his father, an outstanding amateur wrestler in Germany before he moved his family to America.

After graduating from college, Fritz continued as an amateur wrestler in YMCA competition and with the Dallas Athletic Club, but few amateurs could stay long with this man who used his tremendous strength in the most cruel ways possible. As time went on he was outlawed from more and more amateur arenas and it was then he decided to try his cruelty against professionals.

Like the amateurs, Von Erich has learned there are few professionals who can match him for strength. Now, with his terrible Claw, his list of capable opponents (capable of matching him



Moose Evans is Von Erich's victim. Seconds later the Claw was applied

in the ring) has become even smaller.

BUT ALWAYS there are some who feel they can conquer The Claw and a few times this has happened before he has been able to use the crippling hold. Those defeats, however, have been few and far between.

In the ring The Claw is a brutal antagonist and at times displays maniacal tendencies.

Vicious beyond any reason, Von Erich has caused more serious injuries to opponents than any other man in the wrestling ring. For a man his weight (280) he is extremely fast and uses his power and pulverizing tactics to wear down opponents who are slick enough to escape his notorious Claw for any length of time.

In many of his bouts, his fighting outside the ring is almost as active as that inside the ropes. To and from the dressing room he is a constant target for fans who hurl assorted missiles and insulting verbal bombs in his direction. Many times the vicious temper takes

control and he clears the ringside seats going after an adversary.

Then, there are those blood-thirsty fans who admire the inhuman tactics used by the German. Although he has been disqualified in many of his bouts, there is no denying his record is an impressive one—one for which most grapplers would be glad to trade their future wrestling careers.

This man, who spent his early boyhood in East Berlin and who, when he was only 14, slammed a German military officer to the ground for doubting the truth of his age, has held the Canadian Heavyweight Championship, the New England title, the Texas Brass Knuckles championship (symbol of the toughest wrestler in the Lone Star state) and has wrestled with success throughout the world.

He has defeated champions in non-title matches and must be regarded as a top contender for the crown. However, so far world champions have managed to avoid him in a title match.



Art Neilson feels the Von Erich wrath as the German uses his sturdy knee

Despite his apparent disregard for rules of wrestling, Von Erich has a thorough knowledge of all wrestling holds and could, if he chose, become one of the finest scientific aspirants in the business. He can use, and sometimes does, all of the skillful tools, but prefers ruthless, bone-jarring maneuvers that leave opponents suffering even after the match has been won or lost.

ALTHOUGH THE Iron Claw most often is worked on the head of his opponent, it sometimes is clamped on the stomach walls, then twisted and pushed down with all the pressure in his huge muscular body. This causes a partial paralysis to an opponent and can cripple him for life.

Why does he insist on these cruel moves when he could just as well be a smooth, scientific wrestler?

"Professional wrestling today is not a Sunday School picnic," Von Erich answered. "It is rough, rugged and



For a big man Von Erich is amazingly agile as this drop kick demonstrates



Wilbur Snyder is on the receiving end of Von Erich's flying attack

tough—a sport that demands any trick available to get the job done. When I am in the ring I do everything in my power to win over an opponent — I give no quarter and ask none.”

The Claw asserted: “If a wrestler does not expect to absorb his share of punishment, then he should retire and take up some nice, quiet pastime because he certainly does not belong in the ring.”

Von Erich is not a stupid man. He was high in his class at Southern Methodist and could have chosen many profitable professions. Perhaps when his Iron Claw is no longer a weapon of ring terror, he will apply his intelligence to fields of greater benefit for his fellowmen.

But right now the thought never enters his mind. He cannot visualize the time when his dreadful Claw is not the most feared weapon in wrestling arenas all over the world.

Right now he has a grudge against

the world (reason for which he refuses to disclose) and his ring opponents are his targets for getting even. He is a one-man war machine who leaves a trail of broken bones and bruised, helpless bodies wherever he appears.

This is what makes him happy.

Many of his opponents (many more than will openly admit it) are whipped before they enter the ring.

One veteran said after meeting The Claw in a recent match: “He pulverizes you with his very presence. You hear of his reputation, then see him coming out of the dressing room. In the ring you look across to his corner and see those terrible fingers, curling like an octopus seeking something to grip and squeeze. Sure you get scared—I’ll admit I was.”

VON ERICH knows this:

“My opponents are afraid of me—most of them are just plain cowards, but I can understand their fear of this

Claw. It can ruin them.”

Disqualifications, the method by which most of Von Erich’s defeats have been gained, are a real sore spot with the big block-buster.

“In professional wrestling today the referee is something we could do without,” Von Erich claims. “The fans want to see the best man win, but this is not always possible when you are trying to overcome the disadvantage of a chicken-hearted official who can’t stand the sight of a little blood or broken bones. Just let me one time wrestle without interference from a referee — anyone, anyplace — and I’ll show you who is really the master of wrestling.”

This might never be. Most fans agree, with Von Erich in the ring two referees with blackjacks and shotguns are needed.

It’s unlikely they’ll ever allow this killer in the ring without some way of controlling his destructible fury. ★



Prior to match referee handcuffs the Bruiser, Weingeroff



Both men intently watch the action of bout at ringside

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

Von Brauner Twins vs.

One of the wildest tag team matches Mid-western fans have ever seen occurred late last year when Kurt and Karl Von Brauner, using their usual tactics, defeated Art and Stan Neilson.

And even though the Von Brauners' manager, Gentleman Saul Weingeroff, was handcuffed to Dick the Bruiser to keep him from interfering, it was Weingeroff in an indirect way who contributed to the disputed triumph. The sinister manager's cane turned what appeared to be a Neilson victory into another sordid win for the German twins.

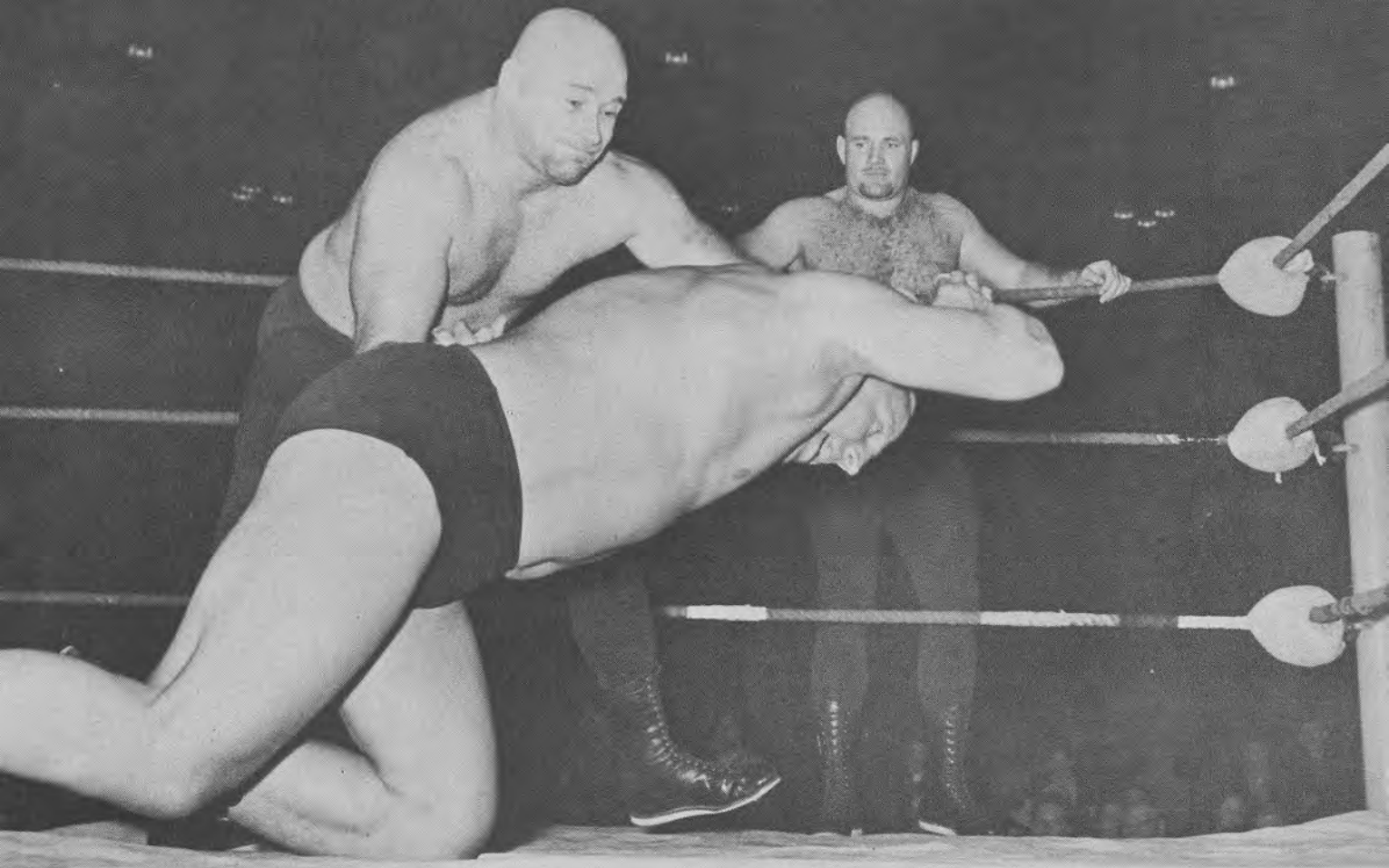
Weingeroff, who has threatened a libel suit against Big Time Wrestling for a picture in the December, 1962 issue, had been chained to the Bruiser as a compromise measure. In an earlier match he had interfered and the Neilsons insisted he be barred from ringside. The Von Brauners refused to enter the ring unless their manager was there to advise them.

The Bruiser offered to sit at ringside and keep Weingeroff in tow. After much hassling and arguing, both sides agreed to the proposal.

MANY TIMES DURING the slam-bang bout Weingeroff forgot the handcuffs and jumped for the ring, only to be halted as the Bruiser jerked him back. Each team took a fall in the wide open battle and in the third and deciding fall action the Neilsons were getting the best of it. After nine minutes the blond grapplers appeared to have it all wrapped up as Art lofted Kurt across his shoulders, applying his deadly back-breaker.

But with the referee's attention turned toward Stan, trying to chase him out of the ring, Karl grabbed Weingeroff's cane, pivoted and jammed it into Art's stomach. Art collapsed and lay writhing on the canvas. It was an easy matter for Kurt to pin the 250-pounder.

It all happened in about two seconds' time



Karl Von Brauner brings Art Neilson to the mat while Kurt watches intently from the corner. Kurt then stomped Art

The Neilsons

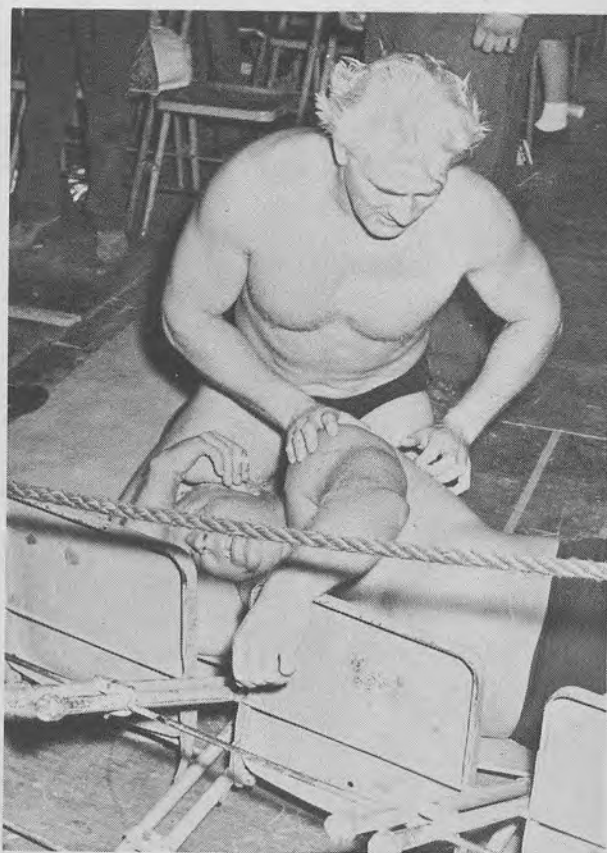
and as the referee returned to the action, all he saw was Kurt laying across the prone Neilson.

BUT THINGS, IT turned out, were just getting underway. The Bruiser dragged Weingeroff behind him into the ring as he made a beeline for the ref to protest. But it was to no avail.

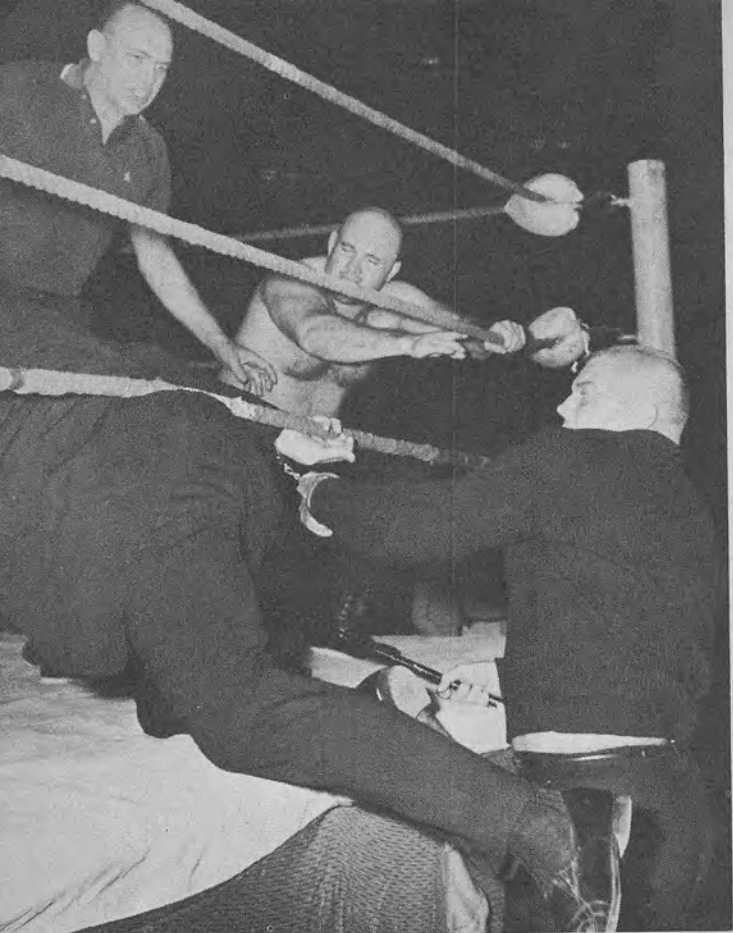
A ringside policeman gave the key to the handcuffs to the referee who loosened Weingeroff first. At the instant he was free Weingeroff and both Von Brauners shoved the Bruiser toward the rope and snapped the cuff around it. With the Bruiser almost helpless, all three began attacking him. Art was still prostrate on the mat and when Stan came to the Bruiser's aid, he too was ruthlessly manhandled.

The melee finally was broken up by police. The Bruiser later gained some measure of revenge as he met and defeated Weingeroff in a handicap match in which the "gentleman" had to be pinned three times within 20 minutes.

It only took the Bruiser 12 minutes. ★



Stan lends a hand to Art who had been tossed out of ring



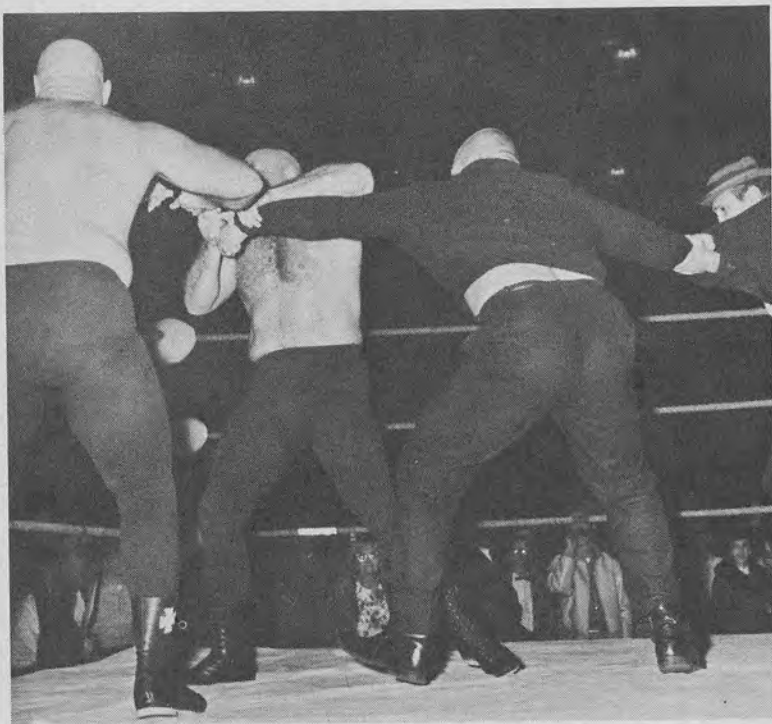
Bruiser holds on tight as Weingeroff struggles into ring



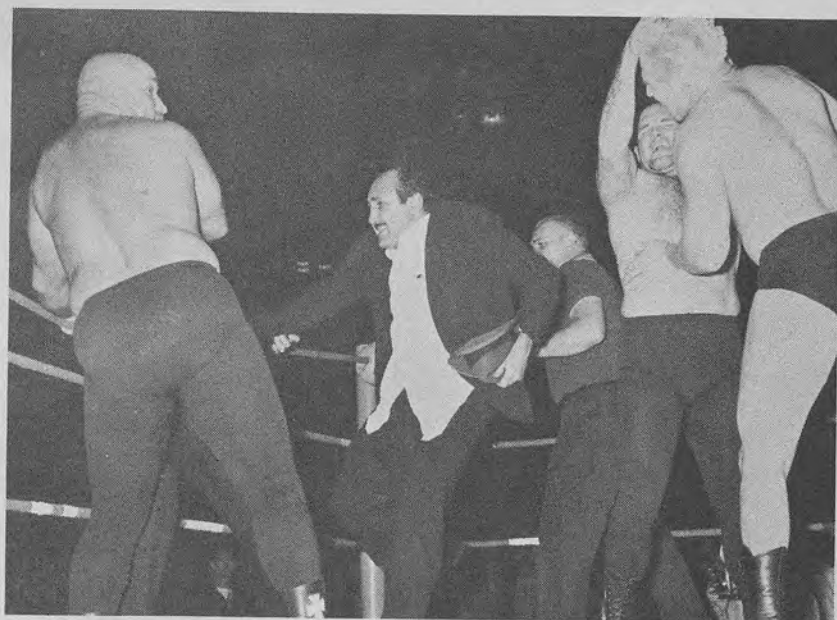
Weingeroff meekly follows Bruiser during course of match



The end came suddenly when Karl grabbed Weingeroff's cane and jabbed Art

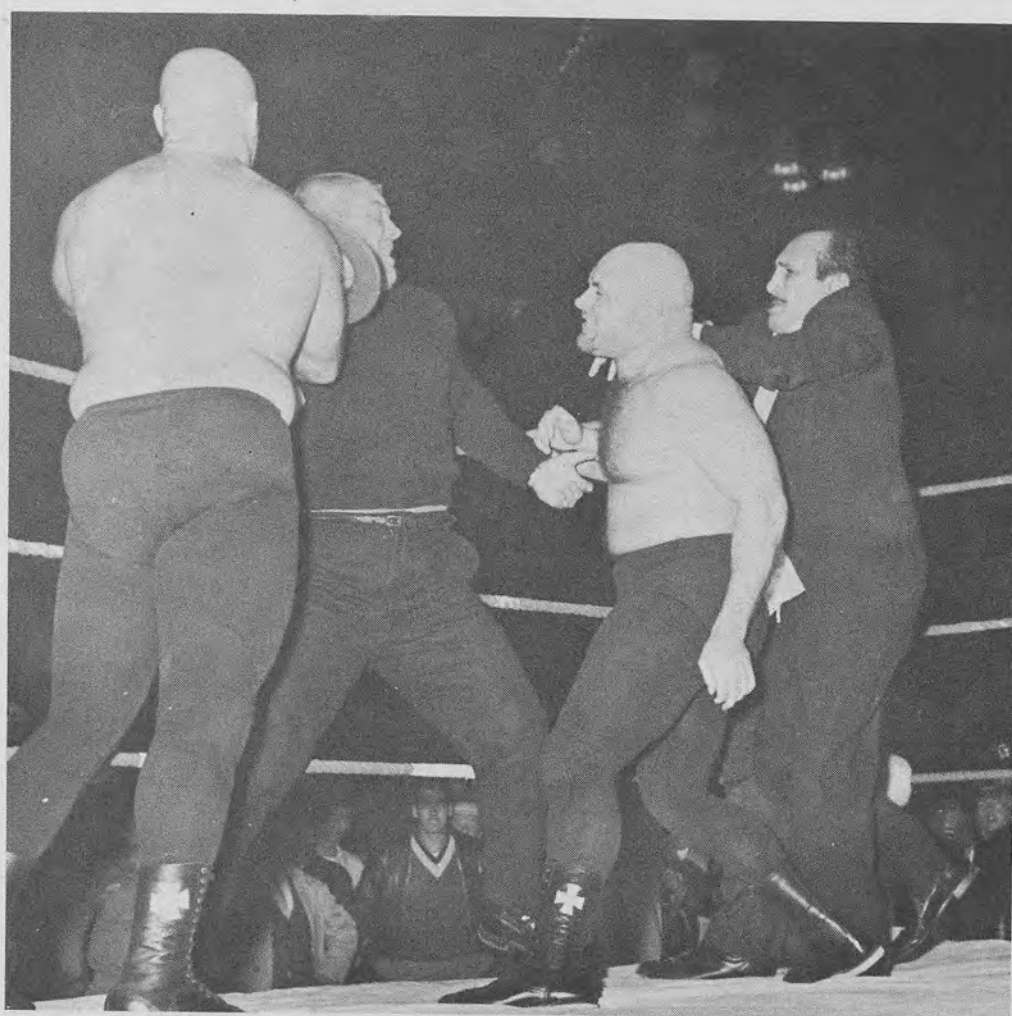


When the handcuffs were removed from Weingeroff's wrist, the Von Brauner twins snapped the Bruiser to the ring rope



Weingeroff wants to counsel his boys but Bruiser keeps him well in tow

As Kurt keeps Stan away, Weingeroff and Karl kick and gouge the Bruiser



Even Weingeroff joined the Von Brauners who ruthlessly attacked the almost helpless Bruiser

When The Farmer

BY BARRY CLARY

Twelve years ago a bronzed, muscular young farmer crawled through the ropes of a temporary ring set up in the St. Joseph, Missouri armory for the weekly wrestling show.

There was a rumble around the ring-side, then a fan gave voice to what dozens of others were thinking: "Why, that's Sonny Myers—Hi, Sonny."

The good-looking 22-year-old youth smiled and waved at his neighbor — "Hi Herman. The corn sure needs a good rain, doesn't it?"

Before the fan could answer, the announcer came up with a better answer — the answer to the question in the minds of more than 1,500 wrestling fans who had crowded into the armory that night: What was Sonny Myers doing in the ring?

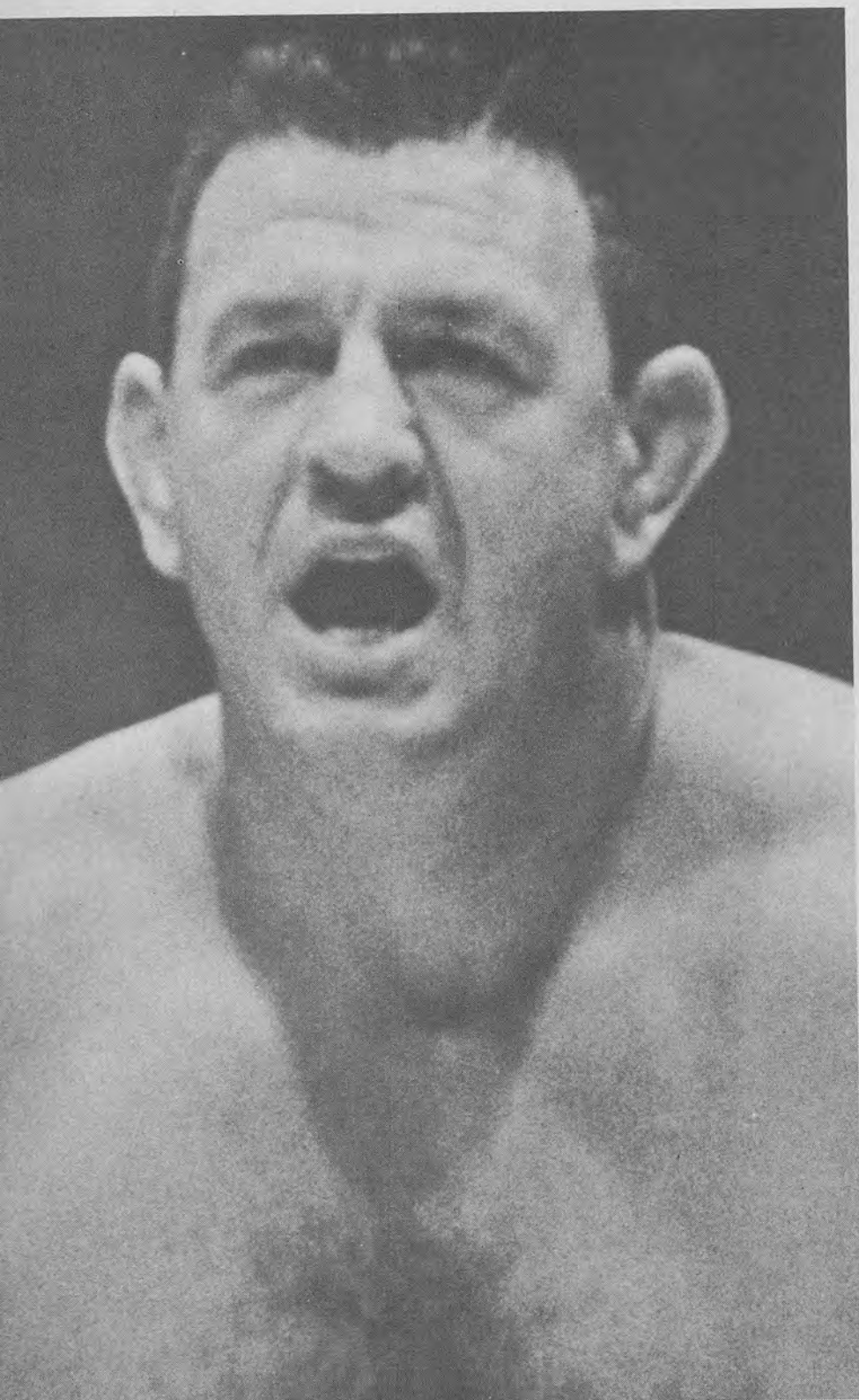
"We regret that flight difficulties in Detroit have forced a substitution for tonight's match with Lou Thesz," the announcer informed the fans. "However, one of your neighbors has agreed to meet the great Thesz to avoid disappointing those who came to watch the champion in action."

THEN HE pointed to the corner where the young farmer stood and announced, "At 227 pounds from St. Joseph, Missouri—Sonny Myers."

There was a terrific roar from the fans for the well-liked boy. He had wrestled around the area as an amateur, but not one person in the audience would have expected him to enter the ring with the professional champion of the world.

No—Sonny didn't win that night. As a matter of fact, Thesz tossed him in two quick falls—but it was the night Myers left the farm for city lights and the professional wrestling arenas.

After the match the great champion



Met The City Slicker

went to Sonny's dressing room and congratulated him on his showing.

"You have nothing to be ashamed of," Thesz told the youth. "You certainly proved to me that with a little experience you could be a success as a professional wrestler. You have many good moves, you're fast and strong enough to get the job done."

Sonny, who all his life had known only the barest of necessities for existence, had heard of the big money wrestlers earned. He had watched them arrive in their slick Cadillacs and expensive, tailored clothes.

THAT NIGHT he wondered if Thesz was right. Maybe he could earn some of that big money.

He looked down at his ready-made, \$29.95 suit, the only one he owned. His shoes, though well cared for, were an inexpensive brand from a cut-rate store in St. Louis. When he left the armory he crawled into the 11-year-old family car for his return to the farm.

It would be nice to enjoy the luxury of good things and fine cars. Maybe he could even assist his father who, for as long as Sonny could remember, had barely eked out an existence on the small farm. Surely it was worth a try.

His father, though reluctant to lose the services of his son from farm chores, encouraged Sonny to follow his desire to enter the ring. And Sonny, not wanting to leave his father stranded, agreed to return home whenever possible and assist with the farm work.

The next day Sonny packed his tattered bag, put on his ready-made suit and purchased a train ride to St. Louis. He telephoned Thesz at his hotel and informed him he had decided to follow his advice.

The surprised champion actually had not expected to hear from his young



Sonny Myers is always on the go in the ring. Here he leaps over his opponent

farm opponent again. Nevertheless, he welcomed Sonny to St. Louis and telephoned a promoter, asking him to give the young St. Joseph grappler a break.

THAT WAS all the persistent young man needed—a break. He had been hungry long enough—Sonny was not going to fail.

And he hasn't.

Today Sonny Myers is recognized as one of the finest wrestlers in the country and demands top pay wherever he appears. Just how successful he has been financially only he knows, but it's a fact he has purchased three farms and made his father overseer of the land. He owns a huge home just outside of St. Joseph, two new cars are parked in his driveway (one of them a Cadillac) and he has a wardrobe filled with expensively tailored suits.

"I guess I've done all right," is the only answer to come from the popular ex-farmer when the question is asked.

It isn't that he doesn't appreciate the fact wrestling has pulled him from the bare livelihood on that small farm to luxuries that few men ever attain. He simply regards his financial assets his own business.

"I never dreamed when I was helping Dad plow corn and thresh wheat that someday I would be making this kind of money just for wrestling," Myers said during an interview recently. "I certainly would be a selfish individual if I said wrestling has not been good to me. I love every ring and every fan."

DURING THE early years of his life Sonny could see no future ahead other than farming or factory work. He tried the factory when in his teens, but soon gave up the confining work to return to the farm.

"I like farming, and someday, when I am finished as a wrestler, I may return to it," Sonny said. "But farming could never have provided the financial success I have found in wrestling."

As a youngster, and even when in high school, Sonny never knew what it was to have an extra nickel or to wear trousers without a patch on the seat and knees. His father was barely keeping his head above water and food on the table from the money earned on the farm



Emile Dupre has the surprised look as Myers prepares to peel him from one side of the ring to the other

However, Sonny was an outstanding athlete at Pickett High School, excelling in football, basketball, track, golf and baseball.

He had a great desire to acquire a college education, but the financial distress of his family made this dream almost an impossibility. However, he managed two years at the University of Missouri by earning money playing professional baseball.

Sonny reluctantly quit school after those two years and took a job in the Swift Company packing plant at St. Joseph as a laborer, but every day his hate for the job grew until he could no longer stand it.

HE RETURNED to farm work, but

not for long. Within a few months Uncle Sam sent him an invitation to join the Army and Sonny served 19 months with the 80th Infantry Division.

After his discharge, Sonny considered a return to baseball, farming and several other opportunities, but his Dad needed him on the farm and there he returned.

The rise of Myers in the wrestling world was rapid after that initial match. He learned a lot from Thesz that night, and in every match thereafter he learned a little more—never envious of an opponent with more skill, but rather thankful for the chance to learn from him.



Bronco Lubich is victim of Myers' cradle as Johnny Weaver watches



Myers flies through the air ready to pull foe down for spectacular pin

In scratching his way to the top of the heap, Myers at one time set a record for the Missouri area by winning 45 straight matches. He invaded the Southwest and captured the Texas State title less than two years after turning professional and for various periods has held Missouri State and Central States championships.

HE'S ONE of the finest airborne mat kings, his dropkicks fired with the rapidness of machine gun fire at times. He has also become a crowd pleaser with use of his atomic drop, Japanese sleeper and backbreaker. There are few in the ring who can move as fast or who can boast of having mastered such a wide variety of match-winning maneuvers.

After ring success and a comfortable

bank account, Sonny looked for new fields for relaxation away from the ring. These he has found on the golf course and handball courts.

The popular wrestler immediately mastered the fairways and greens and some of the nation's top golf professionals claim he could join the tour and pocket some of the big money with everyday practice. The famous Ben Hogan is one who is convinced of this from experience.

In a pro-am match sponsored by the Professional Golfers Association Sonny (later claiming "I had a good day and the other guys were having it tough") fired a sizzling 68 to best some of the finest professionals in the world. Hogan knows about this. He was the one who finished second with

a 72, four strokes behind the "Sunday golfer."

ALTHOUGH Sonny claims he was lucky, he is proud of the special medal designed by the PGA and presented to him for beating the pros.

Handball, he claims, helps him with his wrestling footwork. Opponents say on the handball court Sonny is "greased lightning" as he moves around seeking an opening.

When he was 16 his farm friends would have laughed aloud if Sonny had told them someday he would fly his own airplane. Today it wouldn't be funny, because the wrestler does own his own plane and enjoys flying from city-to-city for mat shows.

"I love flying," he said when asked about his airplane. "Up there in the sky, everything is quiet and peaceful—it makes you forget all the tensions of the ground. By the time I leave the plane for a match, I'm as fresh and relaxed as if I had just had eight hours of sleep."

Sonny has become known for his coolness in the ring and his attitude with fans has made him their friend. In most cases, that is.

However, one night in Texas he found that no matter how much a guy tries, someone isn't going to like him.

As he was leaving the ring an irate fan leaped on him with a knife and plunged it deep into his stomach. It took 258 stitches to close the 17-inch wound and Sonny was forced to cancel matches for several months.

Many expected the friendly guy to finally lose his temper and go gunning for revenge, but it never happened.

"I hold no grudge against that guy," Sonny said. "He is a REAL wrestling fan—one who just got a little too hot under the collar."

Maybe to Sonny a 17-inch cut by a knife is small return for the thousands of good, loyal fans who have stormed the box offices everywhere he has appeared and in so doing have assisted him to a position of financial independence.

Like he said:

"I love every arena and every fan."

Even the ones who stick him with a knife. ★

The Shoe Cobbler Who Became World's Champion ... Six Times



There was deathly silence in the gigantic Toronto arena that night as the huge crowd waited for the appearance of the two principals in the main event.

It was a silence of anticipation of great things to come. Twice before the bout had been scheduled, then cancelled when the champion himself had failed to appear. Tonight the word had spread quickly through the arena—Champion Buddy Rogers was here and he would finally defend it against the man some fans consider the greatest of them all—Gentleman Lou Thesz.

Did Rogers fear Thesz, the 45-year-old granite man of wrestling who had the world's title when Rogers was still in rompers? It was a question that was left unanswered. But it was a fact that twice before when the two had been scheduled Rogers had come up with an excuse to be absent.

Suddenly wild cheering started in the rear of the arena and mounted as the capacity audience spied Thesz walking from his dressing room toward the ring. Shoulders back and head erect, the veteran looked as trim as in 1937 when he first won the title. His 225 pounds were distributed over the 6-2 frame in such a way as to make his 45 years seem a lie.

HE LOOKED THE same, but this great physique couldn't erase those 45 years and the question was in the mind of every one of those wrestling fans—could Thesz do the impossible and regain his title? Could he become the first man in history to win the World's heavyweight wrestling crown six times?

Already the record books showed he had held it five times, the most of any man except his old friend and trainer, Strangler Lewis. A victory for Thesz that night (January 24, 1963) would mean a new record.

Lou Thesz, whose strong legs have been greatly responsible for his winning the world's championship six times, slams his foe headfirst into the mat

Cheers turned to catcalls as the champion started toward the ring. Rogers, never the best liked of wrestlers, was even less popular after excusing himself twice before on scheduled meetings with Thesz.

What happened, of course, is now history. Thesz did win it in two straight falls to become champion for the sixth time. That's the way it's recognized in all record books.

What had brought this great mat king out of retirement to again travel to all corners of the globe defending his title?

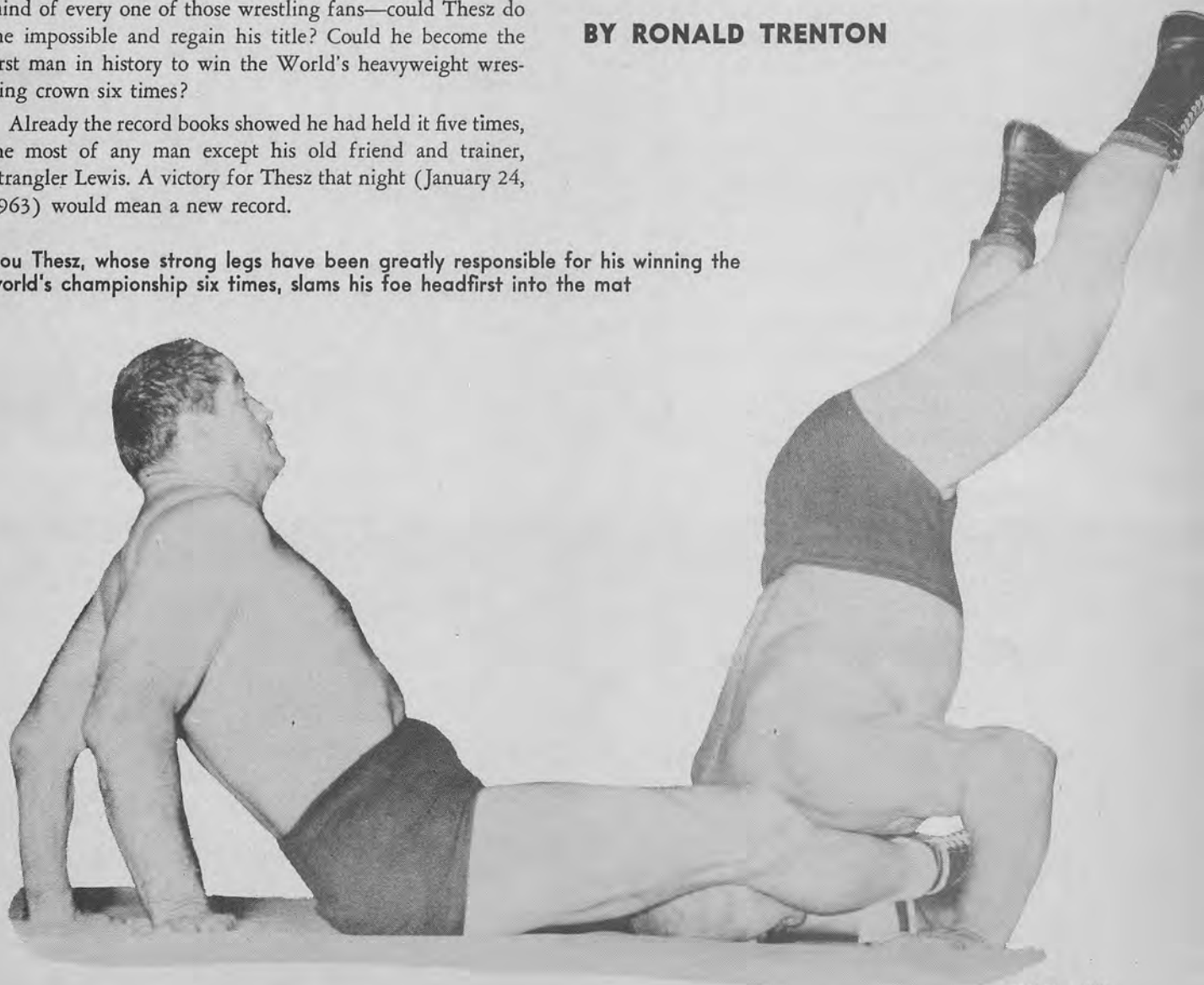
Thesz was in semi-retirement on his spacious resort in Phoenix, Arizona. Reservations were rolling in, piling up to such a point that all 60 rooms were spoken for months in advance. He was making money, and the money he had earned and saved in past wrestling years was in the bank, drawing interest.

He still wrestled on occasion simply for love of the game.

Then came an invitation to compete in the All-Asian Wrestling Tournament in Japan. The invitation was a surprise, but an honor that could not be ignored. The more he thought about it the better the idea seemed. He felt good and in the few matches he did appear he was winning.

BUT GOING TO JAPAN meant an absence of more

BY RONALD TRENTON



than a month from his Casa Siesta Lodge (House of Sleep) and it would mean the full responsibility would rest with his wife.

She knew his love for wrestling and his wife encouraged him to make the trip.

So Thesz packed his bags and boarded a plane to Japan. He pulled one of the surprises of the century when he wrestled 23 times in 30 days and left Japan with the All-Asiatic wrestling championship locked safely in his trunk.

"During that string of wins I defeated Dara Singh, the best of all Indian wrestlers, then pinned Rikidozan, Japan's best," Thesz recalled. "Most of the 23 matches were worked in different cities and neither the traveling nor work seemed to bother me."

The quiet-spoken champion who, despite only eight years of formal education, talks like a college professor, said after returning to Phoenix he again started to get the "wrestling bug."

"I felt sure after my victories in Japan I could win back the world's title," Thesz said. "It would mean the sixth time I had won it—a new record. That, to me, was worth more than any money that might be earned from the belt."

As always, his wife encouraged him to follow his desires.

"After all, she has the business head in the family," Thesz said. "While I was in Japan she had gotten along well, although some of the handyman's work which I enjoy she had to have hired done."

And so the great Lou Thesz was back. It took only a short string of victories to know he was good enough to meet the champion Rogers and promoters throughout North America started bidding for the bout. Toronto landed it; then, after two postponements, staged it for a standing room audience that watched Lou become champion for the sixth time.

HE WAS ONLY 19 when he first became champion, taking the crown from Everett Marshall December 29, 1937 in St. Louis. He lost it February 11, 1938 to Steve (Crusher) Casey in Boston, then regained it February 23, 1939 from Marshall, who had taken it from Casey in September of 1938.

On June 23, 1939 Bronko Nagurski lifted the crown from Lou's head in Houston, Texas, but the granite man got it back April 25, 1947 when he whipped Whipper Billy Watson in St. Louis. Bill Longson grabbed it from Thesz November 21 that same year in St. Louis, but July 28, 1948 the greatest of champions got even when he stopped Longson for the title in Indianapolis.

Thesz then held the title until March 15, 1956 when Watson took it in Toronto. Lou took it back from Watson November 9, 1956 in St. Louis and Dick Hutton grabbed it from him November 14, 1957 in Toronto.

That was when Lou went into the real estate business in California and later purchased the resort in Phoenix, planning to retire from wrestling with the exception of a "few bouts to stay in shape."

But the call of the ring was strong and he's back.

How long does he intend to continue?

"That's awfully hard to say," he answered. "Certainly, as long as I feel as I do now I will go on. Physically, I feel better than I have ever felt and mentally it's the same. I no longer have to worry and fret about either a match or money. I don't leave my fight in the dressing room as so many of the younger fellows do, then when they get to the ring they don't have it."

However, he does not plan to travel as extensively as in his younger days, and does not expect to make as much money.

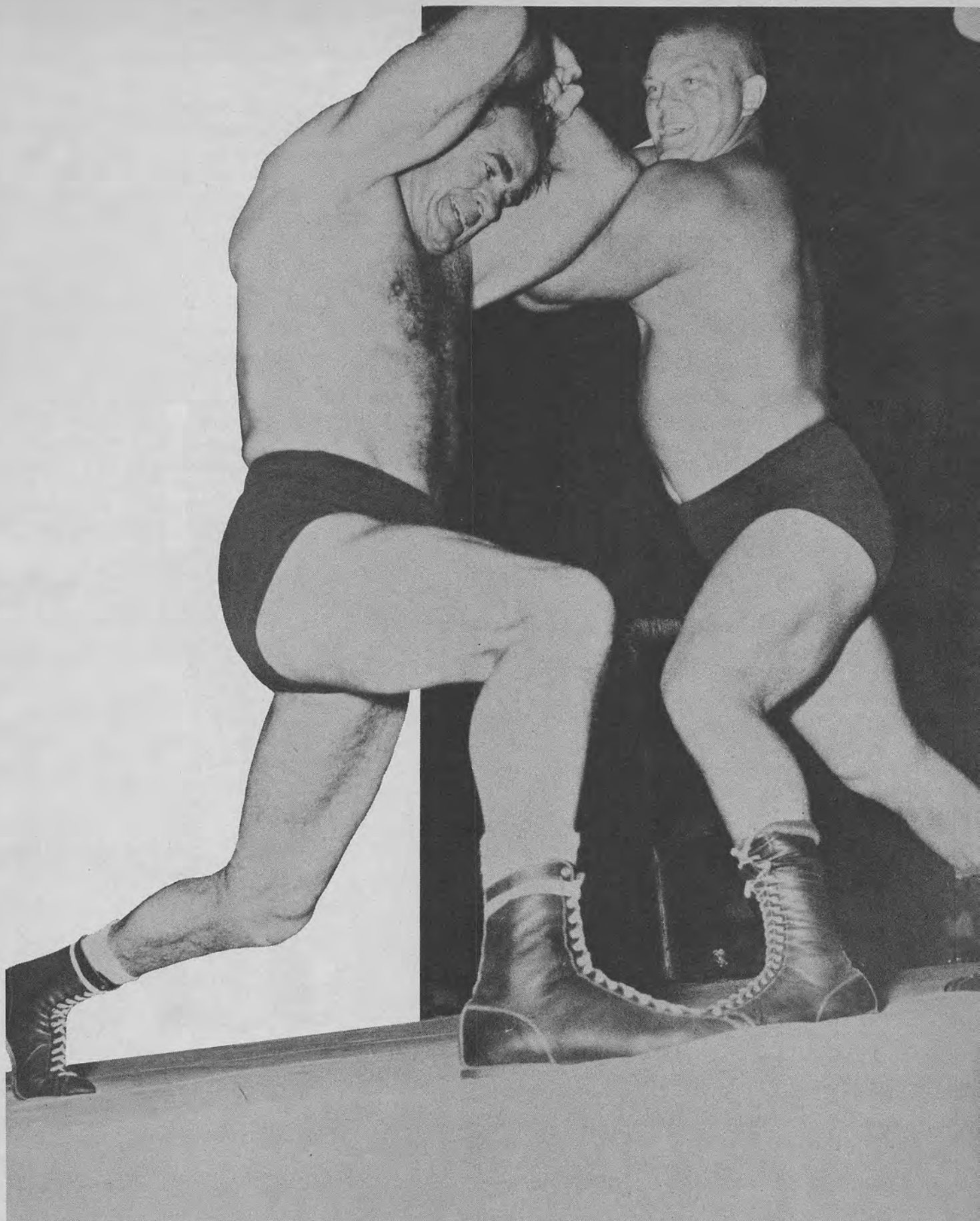
"I certainly don't expect to make \$200,000 this year," Thesz said. "Those years I made that kind of money I was traveling about 300,000 miles. I'll be fortunate to make half that this year."

LOU WAS NOT BORN with a silver spoon in his mouth. His father was a Hungarian shoe cobbler and brought his business to America with him before Lou was born. He was only 8 years old when his father put him in the shop as a helper and only an eighth grader when the head of the family decided he should become a full-time shoemaker.

He first won the wrestling title when only a teen-ager because, in addition to being one of the finest shoe cobblers

A familiar Thesz tactic is the elbow smash which usually causes his opponent to beg for mercy





Thesz and Dick the Bruiser test each other's strength. The Bruiser has come as close to beating Thesz as anyone and is considered a top threat for Thesz' world heavyweight championship

in Hungary, Papa Thesz was also one of that nation's finest amateur grapplers.

Almost every evening after work in the shoe shop the two would have a wrestling workout in Mama's kitchen. And one night a week they would attend matches and watch the top professionals in the local St. Louis arena.

Lou was only 16 when he first wrestled a professional, Joe Sanderson, a fine St. Louis wrestler. After the youngster had beaten him, Sanderson offered to become his coach.

Sanderson was enthused with Thesz, but didn't have the connections to get Lou into the big time. Most of the early experience was hard going, working in tank towns, sometimes for promoters who wouldn't pay off, and always in front of small audiences for small purses.

Then one day Ed "Strangler" Lewis came to town looking for a warmup match and through a process of elimination Lou was chosen. The youngster surprised everyone when he pinned the aging Lewis, then did it again in a return match.

Lewis was one who recognized talent and offered to assist in teaching Thesz the ropes. With the connections gained by the former five-time champion, Lou was soon on top, working before huge crowds in big arenas and finally the title match in 1937.

"Ed and I are still great friends," Lou said. "I still lean on him for advice when I need counseling. He's the greatest."

ONLY A FEW WEEKS before this interview at St. Louis, Lou had gone to Tulsa, Oklahoma and spent more than three hours talking with the former wrestling great.

"He's almost blind now, you know, but his mind is just as sharp as it was 30 years ago," Thesz said.

"Wrestling has been good to me," the great champion admitted. "It's given me a chance to make more money than I could have ever earned otherwise, and a chance to see the world. Without it I probably would have become a shoe cobbler."

Not that he has anything against the shoe cobbling profession. As a matter of fact, he still gets some practice.

Lou likes his ring shoes stitched on the inside—a feat that is performed on a McKay stitcher. One day recently in Nashville, Tennessee, he stopped in a shoe repair shop to have them repaired and asked: "Do you have a McKay stitcher?"

The proprietor, who recognized Thesz, thought the champion was talking through his hat.

"What do you know about a McKay stitcher?" he asked the champ.

Walking to the machines, Lou sat down at the stitcher, repaired his own shoes, paid the astounded proprietor for the work and left him scratching his head.

Thesz was married to Fredda Huddleston of Houston in 1945, having met the pretty Texan at a San Antonio dog show. Both were dog fanciers, and that day Lou's Doberman pinscher had won the top prize—"Best dog in show."

Fredda came over to admire the dog and Lou stood admiring Fredda.

"She was impressed with my dog, but I was impressed with her," Lou said. "I'm afraid for about six months my dogs were neglected. Then she said 'yes' and we were married."

THEY'RE THE PARENTS of a son, Jeffery, age 10, whom Thesz is trying to steer away from the wrestling game.

"If he insists on becoming a wrestler, then I'll help him all I can. He loves it now and has big hands and an athletic body to make a good one, but I won't encourage him in it," Thesz said. "It's an abnormal life, what with all the traveling and publicity. I would rather he would lead a more normal life."

Lou insists on getting home at least every two weeks, and when he does the family enjoys outdoor sports together. They love salt water fishing, skin diving, skiing and horses.

"Someday I'll really quit this game and go back to that resort with my family," Thesz said. "Right now I don't know just when that will be. Someone will have to convince me I no longer belong in wrestling."

Until that day comes Lou will continue to be what he is today—a real gentleman and great champion. ★



Thesz (left) and Ed "Strangler" Lewis, the former champ and once manager of Thesz, walked with a seeing eye dog in 1954 prior to a benefit for the blind. It proved ironic as Lewis recently lost his sight

BY RICHARD BRANCIFORTE

BUDDY ROGERS

HASN'T GIVEN UP



Buddy Rogers, who was the king of wrestling for 18 months until dethroned in early 1963, is determined to make his comeback bid a success.

Rogers, a proud and vain individual, will remember 1963 as long as he lives. He lost two championships within the first five months.

Reigning supreme as the top gate attraction in the East, as well as Chicago and other areas of the nation, for better than three years, he suddenly went downhill at a frightening speed. As an example of what his drawing power had been, fans paid more than one million dollars (an average of almost \$34,000 per card) to see him 30 times in Chicago.

Rogers captured the National Wrestling Alliance's world heavyweight championship from Pat O'Connor before more than 38,000 fans at Chicago's Comiskey Park in June of 1961. He was a working champ, sometimes defending his title five times a week.

But on January 24th, 1963 old master Lou Thesz caught up with him at Toronto and two weeks later beat Rogers in a rematch. That gave the NWA crown to Thesz, leaving Rogers with the World Wide Wrestling Federation championship.

On May 24th, 1963 Bruno Sammartino lifted the WWWF crown from Rogers, besting him in only 48 seconds after having lost to Buddy more than 30 times in Chicago, New York, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Washington (D.C.), Newark and many other cities.

Sammartino's triumph came as he drop kicked Rogers twice, lifted him in a bear hug and then hoisted him into a back-breaker.

This astounding turn of events made wrestling buffs sit back and take notice, especially after later developments which saw Rogers last less than 70 seconds in two engagements with Bobo Brazil and 22 seconds against Vittorio Apollo at Baltimore. Rogers also cancelled out of matches at Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Montreal and Akron, Ohio.

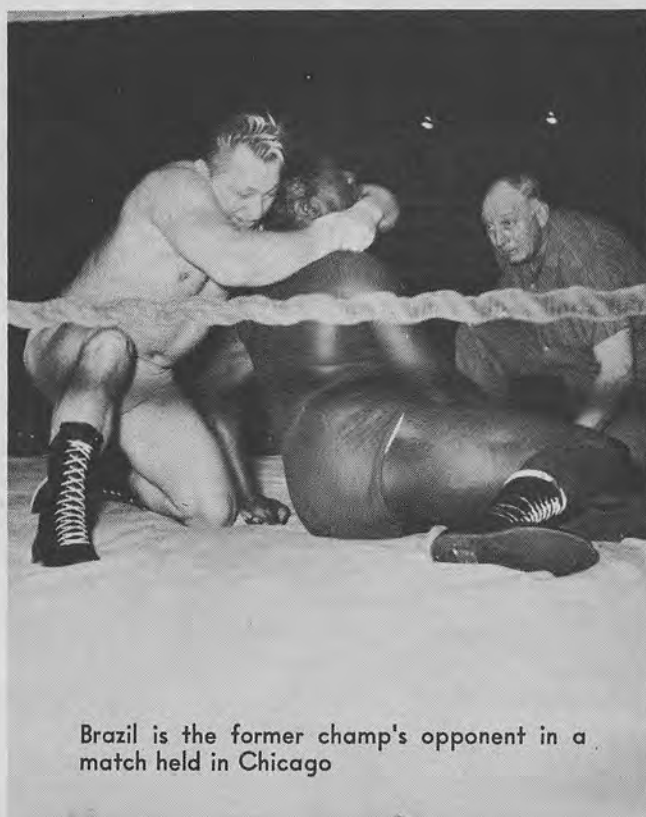
Rumors started flying that Rogers had a chest injury and might have to retire. Then came stories that he had a heart condition.

But a series of checkups by physicians refuted the rumors and it was found that Rogers was simply overtired. He was physically exhausted from the steady grind of defending his championship night after night.

That's why Buddy is resting now, wrestling occasionally. When he feels he's ready, he'll be back in the thick of the fight. ★



Buddy Rogers raises his hands in victory following a recent triumph over Bobo Brazil at Cleveland



Brazil is the former champ's opponent in a match held in Chicago

BY SHARON KISSELL

At Home With The



Joe Blanchard holds Taylor while Tully holds Queenie, given him by Wilbur Snyder. That's Jackie Blanchard sitting next to her famous husband

Joe Blanchards

The wrestler-TV commentator is a busy man, traveling from coast to coast, but he always finds time to enjoy his family. He once flew 4,000 miles just to see his 9-year-old son's first Little League baseball game.

Jackie Blanchard's green eyes sparkled and a quick, friendly smile revealed bright, perfect teeth as she greeted this writer at the door of her comfortable home in suburban Indianapolis.

"I feel honored," the lovely wife of one of the nation's favorite wrestlers and top television commentators admitted as she showed me into a comfortable living room. "It's usually Joe newspaper and magazine writers want to talk to."

Big Time Wrestling had assigned me the task of informing its readers of the quieter side of a wrestler's life—his home, family and friends. Joe Blanchard's attractive wife (he refers to her as a ring widow) appeared the perfect interview.

Who could better tell fans of a wrestler's home life than his wife?

For Jackie there are no regrets that she married the handsome athlete she met while he was playing professional football for her hometown team, the

Edmonton Eskimos, in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

"If we had our lives to live over again I am sure Joe would again choose professional wrestling as his career, and I'm certain I would choose him as a husband," Jackie said. "Despite the fact he seems to spend more time away from home than he does with us (Jackie and two sons), he is a wonderful father and an ideal family man."

FOR THIS pretty mother, life has



Jackie helps Joe go through his fan mail as he takes time to answer letters



During a night on the town Jackie and Joe cut a "mean rug"

had two distinct adventures—the glitter and excitement of traveling with her husband to wrestling arenas across the nation, and now the quiet, secure neighborhood life in their suburban home.

Is it lonely for a wrestler's wife when her husband spends so much time away?

"Of course we would rather have Joe home all the time," Jackie answered. "But we know his business is wrestling and we understand his business requires much traveling. We know he loves us and feel secure in this knowledge."

Jackie always used "we," including her two sons, Tully, 9, and Taylor, 2, in her conversation.

When Joe is permitted to spend a few days at home he seems to crowd into a few hours more family life than most fathers enjoy in a month.

"We try to make up for his absence by crowding everything into a few days," Jackie explained. "Almost every minute he is home the four of us are together — swimming, picnicking, cookouts and dozens of other things families do as families."

JOE, OF course, has been an athlete almost since he was in rompers, and Tully is following in his dad's footsteps. Though only 9, the youngster is carving a name for himself locally in Little League baseball and Joe (baseball was one of his favorites in high school and college) spends hours with his son teaching him the techniques of hitting and fielding.

"The first game Tully played Joe was in San Francisco and had several wrestling engagements along the West Coast," Jackie recalled. "He hopped a plane and flew to Indianapolis to watch Tully play, then rushed back to the airport and returned to California without even stopping at the house. He had checked the schedule both ways and barely had time to make his wrestling engagement that night."

Watching Joe in the ring still excites Jackie, but she claims: "I have settled down tremendously since the first time I watched him work."

Jackie explained: "When we were first married I was terribly nervous when I watched Joe at matches. It seemed to me he was always getting

head injuries—he's also had two broken ankles and a bad knee gives him trouble sometimes. But after watching him for more than 10 years I've acquired confidence in him—I know he wouldn't be in there if he couldn't take care of himself."

JACKIE SAT on a bright blue sofa in the Blanchard living room as she talked. It was attractively furnished with contemporary furniture in shades of blue and green. The home, located in one of Indianapolis' quieter areas, is a red brick English cottage with a high pitched roof.

The neighborhood seems far away from the noise and excitement of the wrestling arenas where Joe earns a very good livelihood for himself and family. It might be the home of an aspiring young lawyer or doctor.

A yellow sign near the well manicured Blanchard lawn warns: "Slow, Watch for Children." There is no flash of the artificial so often linked with popular public figures. It's a neighborhood just like thousands of others in sub-divisions throughout the nation.

That lawn didn't get its well-cared-for look by accident, nor was there a gardener employed to keep the property in shape.

"Joe loves to putter with the lawn and bushes and wants a big flower garden someday," Jackie confided. "I wish he had more time to relax. He loves working in the yard and can spend hours reading at night after the children are in bed."

Jackie met Joe when he was her blind date in Calgary one night after an Edmonton football game.

LOOKING AT Jackie, an observer can easily understand why Joe fell for the pretty Canadian. Jackie has green eyes and ash blond hair. Her snow white teeth sparkle with her quick smile and glisten against her beautiful tan, complimented by green slacks and overblouse which she wore with a casual air.

"Joe had wrestled at Kansas State, but his main love there was football," Jackie explained. "As a matter of fact, he first thought he would devote his athletic career to professional football and was doing very well."



Tully's friend Don Stout is the batter as Blanchard pitches to his son



At Little League game Joe advises Tully on the proper grip



Joe is a happy third base coach after Tully had tripled



Chief Wahoo, the wrestler-pro football star, is being interviewed by Blanchard during one of his weekly TV programs

However, a wrestling promoter in Calgary aroused his interest and he consented to give it a try. He's been at it ever since.

"He was football captain at Kansas State and loved it, but he liked wrestling very much," Jackie explained. "He learned there was more money in the ring, so gave up football."

Jackie claims her husband is a "fiend for keeping in condition." We left the house for her to show me the gym he has set up in the garage.

"He works out here constantly," she said. "Sometimes when he has had only two hours sleep he is out here lifting 160-pound weights. He thinks they give him power."

His Diet also is an important part of his conditioning, Jackie said. On days of matches he eats about 4 p.m., dining usually on steak and salad.

"Sometimes during a short layoff he'll get reckless and eat pecan pie or German chocolate cake, but he's careful. He feels he can't afford to allow himself to get overweight," she asserted. "He isn't one for potatoes or heavy, starchy foods."

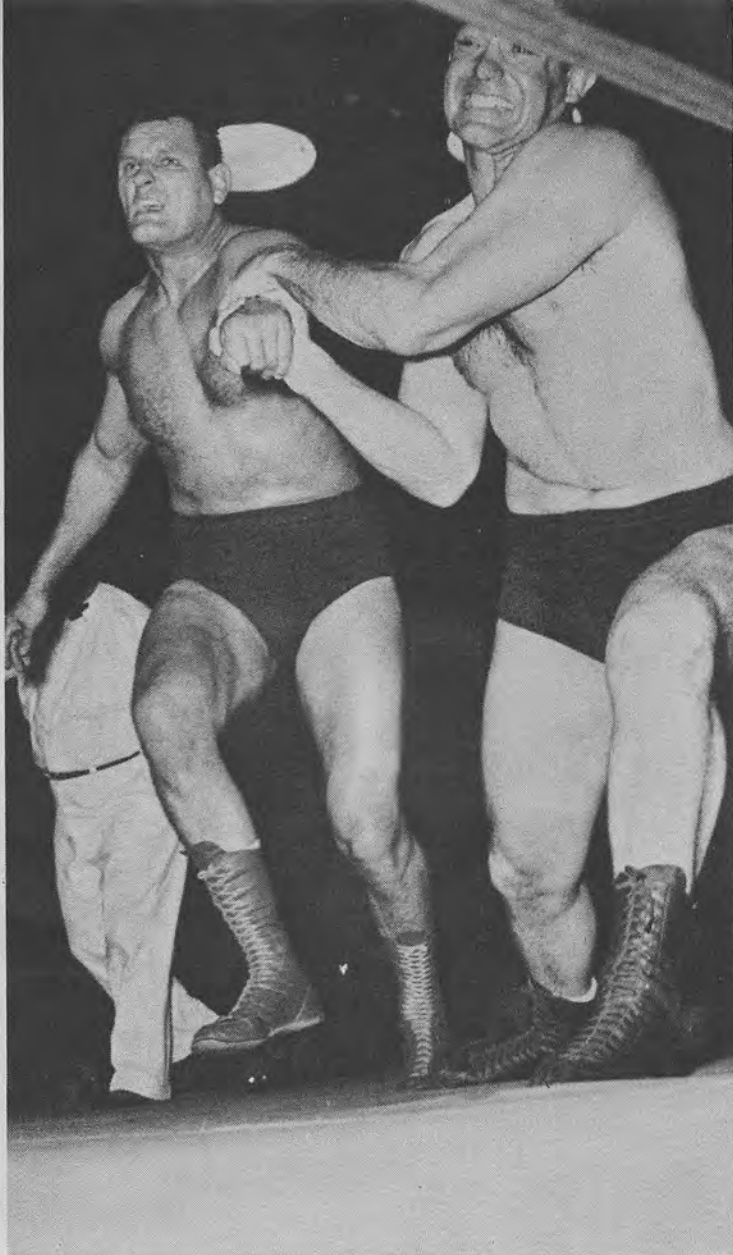
"Joe loves children," Jackie mused. "He coached some high school football and has been training Tully to play baseball and football since he was 3. He thinks the boys should be properly trained in all sports."

Joe was in Montreal the day of our interview.

"He is always flying off somewhere, wrestling five and six nights a week," Jackie said. "Tonight it might be San Francisco, tomorrow Denver and Heaven knows where the next night. That's the way it goes, week after week of catching planes, meals and sleep off schedule."

But there was a far-away look in Jackie's eyes when she said:

"Maybe we'll live in Honolulu someday. They only wrestle once a week there and Joe could be home the other six days. Golly, I'll bet he would really have a big, beautiful flower garden if we lived in Honolulu." ★



Blanchard is an outstanding wrestler. Here he drags Killer Kowalski

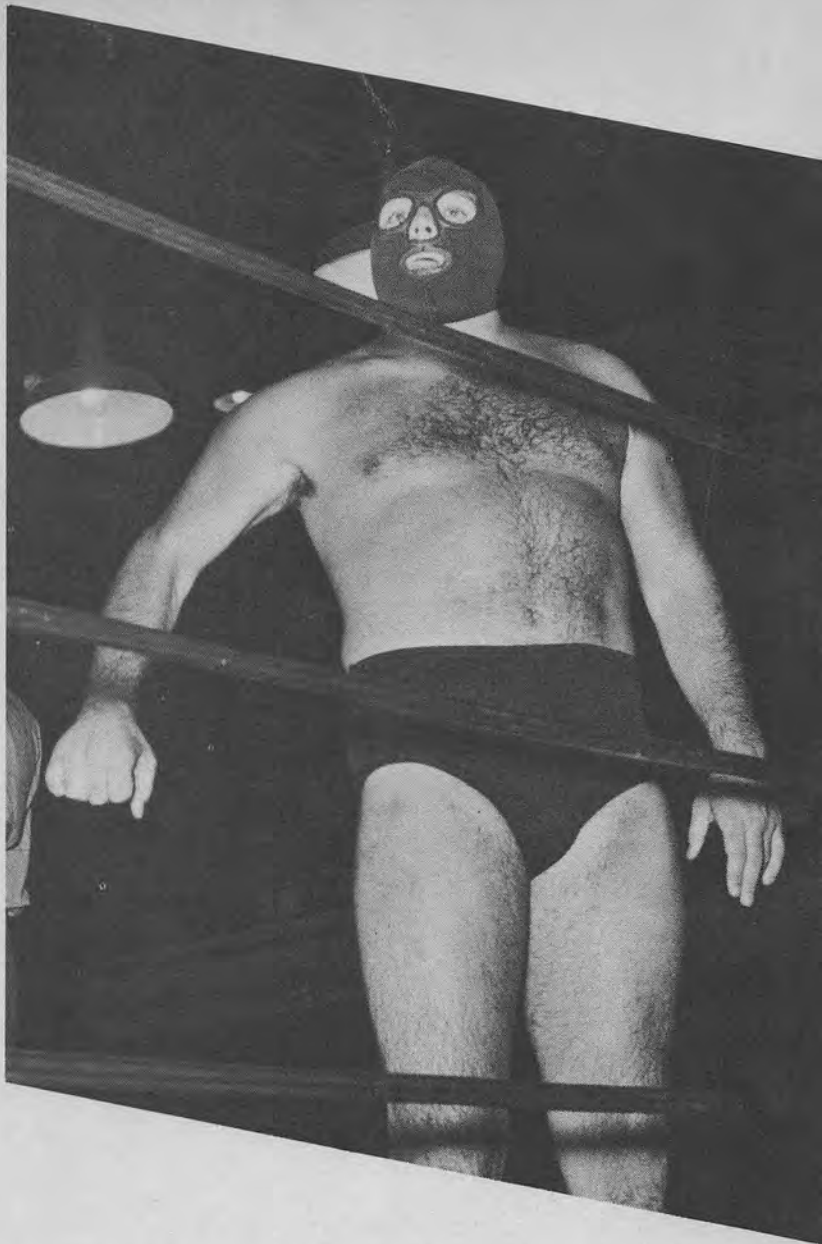


Jackie watches Joe wrestle when she can get away



Joe spends a lot of time in his sleek Jaguar. Taylor's between his parents while Tully and his chum sit up high on a warm Sunday afternoon outing

WHO IS THE MASKED TERROR ?



The newest masked wrestler on the American mat scene is a fellow who calls himself the Masked Terror.

The name fits. Not only has he disposed of his foes in a terrorizing manner but he also has caused the deaths of three fans whose hearts gave out at his furious and insensible ring tactics.

Tony Angelo, who in his wrestling days was known as the Russian Crusher, manages the Terror. And as is the case with most managers, Angelo finds it difficult to just sit and give advice. He gets in on the carnage more often than not.

The Terror-Angelo duo has created intense dislike for themselves all through the Midwest and fans in Detroit, Cincinnati and Indianapolis have become so riled at their antics that the police have been forced to protect them as they enter and leave the ring. The Terror is on the road to becoming the most hated wrestler of

all time and seems to take delight in that fact.

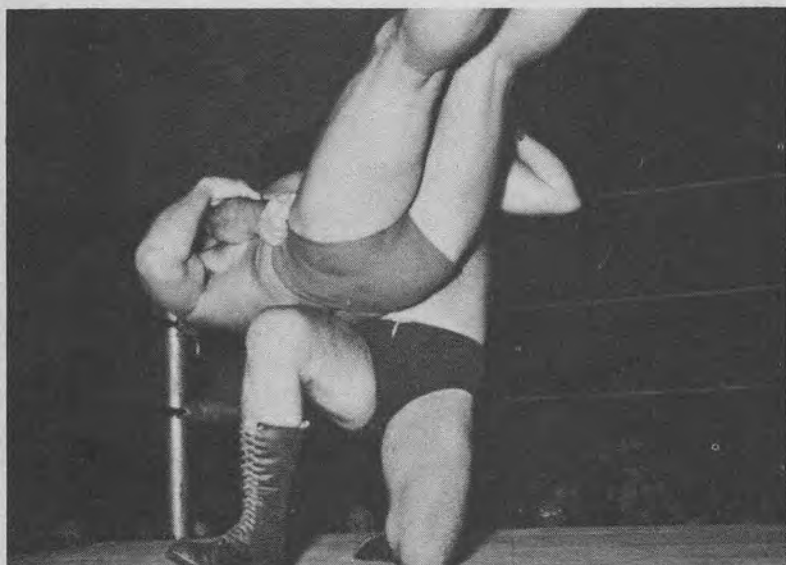
As is the custom whenever a masked grappler appears, fans make a game of trying to discern his identity. Big Time Wrestling will join in.

Guesses to date have been many and varied. They include Big Bill Miller, Don Leo Jonathan, Dick Beyer, the Alaskan, Killer Kowalski and the Great Mortier. The last appears to be one of the best when you remember that Mortier wore a mask as "Zorro" in Florida early this year at the same time Angelo was wrestling in that state.

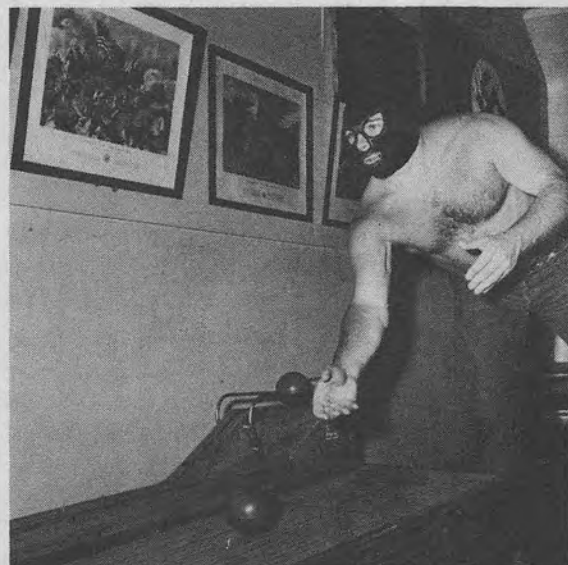
Presented here are a few pictures of the Terror. Others appeared in our arena magazine in the August issue. Readers are invited to study them closely and send their guesses as to his identity to BTW. No prizes are offered but when and if the big guy (he stands about 6-3) is unmasked, we'll print the names of all who were correct in their deductions. ★




The Masked Terror bends over for advice from his manager, Tony Angelo. Angelo always appears with the straw hat, attache case and cigar



This backbreaker over his knee is one of the Masked Terror's chief stocks in trade. One drop is enough



Following a match the Terror invited our photographer to join him at a club. Notice Nazi flag



Yes, this is Penny Banner, the famed girl wrestler. In private life she is the wife of wrestler Johnny Weaver

BEAUTY OF THE RING

Mary Kostecki is a name you've probably never heard before. But Mary, under the title of Penny Banner, forged ahead to become one of the greatest woman wrestlers in the world.

BY W. C. SHAW

The interoffice communication informed her:
"Please come into the office, Miss Kostecki."

Stifling a mild oath, Mary Kostecki picked up her pad and pencil, glanced in the mirror at her pretty face framed with glorious blond hair, then went into her boss' office for what she hoped would be dictation instead of the usual wrestling match.

The 55-year-old pudgy executive seated behind the huge mahogany desk feasted his eyes on the flawless figure of his secretary as she came into the room, then took a quick glance at her perfect legs as she sat down, pencil and pad ready for dictation.

"This letter can wait, Mary," the boss became more familiar. "I've thought over the raise you asked about. I think it can be arranged. Have you thought about my invitation to the cottage for the week end? My wife will be out of the city but there's no reason we couldn't enjoy ourselves."

WHILE HE WAS TALKING he walked around his secretary and placed his hands gently on her shoulders.

For three months Mary had been trying to smile while staying out-of-reach. She had lost her last three jobs because no matter how many times she said "no," men became more insistent.

This time it was too much. She threw her pad and pencil

to the floor, jumped to her feet and planted a resounding slap on the cheek of her tormentor.

Without a backward glance she stomped from the executive's office, picked up her coat and walked out, stopping long enough to ask a friend: "Please mail me my check, Helen. I'm finished again."

The last few years had been rough for Mary Kostecki. Since she quit high school when only 16 to help finance the family's livelihood, she had discovered bosses hired her more for her lovely face and well-rounded figure than for her talent as a secretary. She knew she could be a good secretary, but no one would give her the chance.

For two weeks the picturesque 18-year-old blond walked the streets of St. Louis looking for work. Several offers were made, but a look at the gleam in the prospective employer's eyes told her he expected a girl to be more than just a secretary.

One night she was talking to one of her schoolday friends who the last couple of years had started a climb toward top money in professional wrestling.

"Mary," good-looking Johnny Weaver told the girl he had become much more than "just fond" of, "I'll bet you could make a fortune in wrestling. You were always good at athletics in high school and there is a big demand for top grade girl wrestlers."



During match at Austin, Texas, Penny Banner takes free ride astride opponent Madame X

The pretty girl, almost desperate for security that could be gained on her own talents, promised she would think about it. The more she thought about the idea the more attractive it became. Certainly it would be better wrestling other girls in the ring than trying to outmaneuver 200-pound wolves in the closed confines of an office.

Finally she agreed to give it a try and Johnny sent her to Columbus, Ohio to talk to the late Billy Wolfe.

"If Johnny said you could make the grade, that's good enough for me," Wolfe told the lovely young teen-ager. "With your looks and figure, if you make the grade as a wrestler you will be a sensation."

It took Mary only a few days to prove to Billy that her possessions included something besides beauty. Wrestling came naturally to the St. Louis girl and after only a couple of months training Billy surprised her:

"I've signed you for a match in Akron. I think you're ready for the test, but don't expect to win the first time out. This gal you're wrestling is a real veteran and she's good, but win or lose, we'll know what to expect."

Mary, who at age 15 was one of the finest girls athletes in high school and outstanding as a tumbler and acrobat, had a surprise for Billy. Her veteran foe thought a cyclone had struck and 18 minutes after the opening bell the announcer raised Mary's right hand and reported:

"The winner and latest sensation to come to wrestling, Mary Kostecki."

Both Mary and Billy cringed when the name was blasted to several thousand spectators over the public address system. Mary hadn't thought much about it until now, but it wasn't very pretty or appropriate for a girl who planned to be world's champion.

"We'll have to change that," Billy told her on the return



Madame X struggles to keep Miss Banner from twisting her into position for Boston crab

trip to Columbus. "It isn't worth a penny on a wrestling banner."

"That's it," the excited Mary exclaimed.

"What's it?" the astounded Billy wanted to know. "Did I say something?"

"Penny Banner," Mary said. "From now on I'll be known as Penny Banner."

NOW, SOME NINE YEARS later, that name of Penny Banner is known wherever wrestling crowds gather. That beautiful blond who walked out of her boss' office nine years ago has climbed to the top, wrestling main events from coast to coast.

And, although her wrestling title still is Penny Banner, the original Mary Kostecki has changed her name again. In her climb up the wrestling ladder proposals of marriage have come from all types—laboring men, motion picture stars, producers and tycoons who can write a check for a million dollars for an evening's entertainment. The most famous was Elvis Presley.

These have been easy for Penny to refuse. She has known since she was a teen-ager there was only one man for her, and he finally got around to popping the question.

In her suburban St. Louis home where she happily resides with her husband, the top girl wrestler is known as Mrs. Johnny Weaver.

"We built a big house with plenty of ground to raise our family," Penny explains. "One of these days I plan to leave the professional wrestling to Johnny. We want a big family, and I think the place for me will be home with the children."

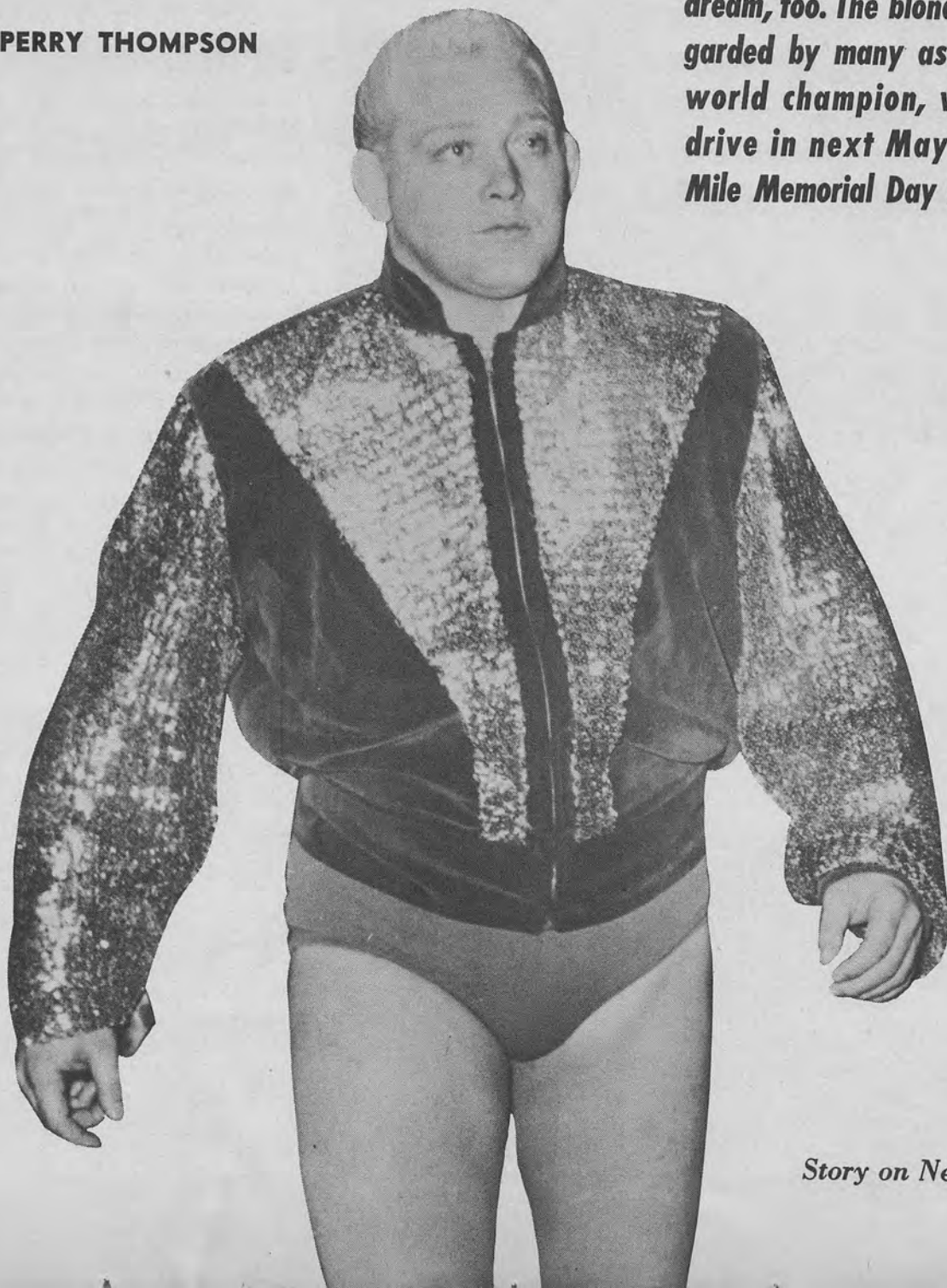
But until this blond bombshell decides to retire from the ring, she'll be drawing capacity houses wherever her name appears on the wrestling banner and the fans know they'll always get more than a penny's worth. ★

RAY STEVENS' DREAM

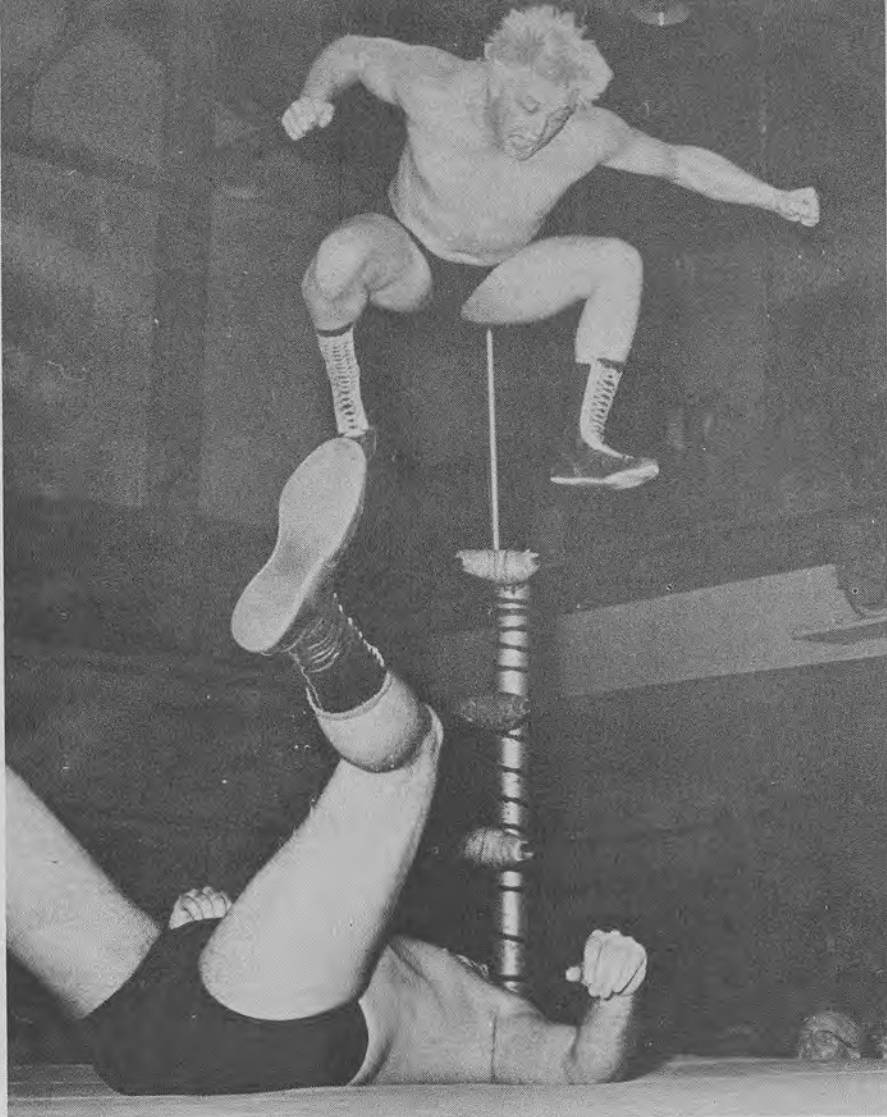
COULD COME TRUE

BY PERRY THOMPSON

It's Much More than just a pipe dream, too. The blond star, regarded by many as a future world champion, wants to drive in next May's "500" Mile Memorial Day Race



Story on Next Page



Ray Stevens sails off top rope to land on foe with his "bombs away" attack

Ray Stevens is a complex personality, perhaps as difficult to figure out as any man in the world of sports.

He's hard to get to know, carrying his ring attitude with him wherever he goes. But once he does become acquainted with a person, and likes him, he's a friend for life.

Granted, there are few that fall in this latter category. There are very few in wrestling. Most of his friends are in other fields, principally racing and anything to do with automobiles, motorcycles and go-karts.

This writer accomplished what few newspaper or magazine reporters have been able to do—we got on Stevens' good side when he spent a great share of the month of May hanging around the Indianapolis 500-Mile Motor Speedway. Perhaps that was because of a mutual friend—Parnelli Jones—who, of course, won the 1963 "500."

Jones, a native of Torrance, California, drives for Californian J. C. Agajanian who owns a number of race cars of various types and numerous racing motorcycles. It was one of Agajanian's cycles that Stevens was piloting a year ago July when he crashed in a race at Sonoma, California,



Hidden from the referee's sight is Stevens' right hand pulling his opponent's trunks as he tries for quick pin

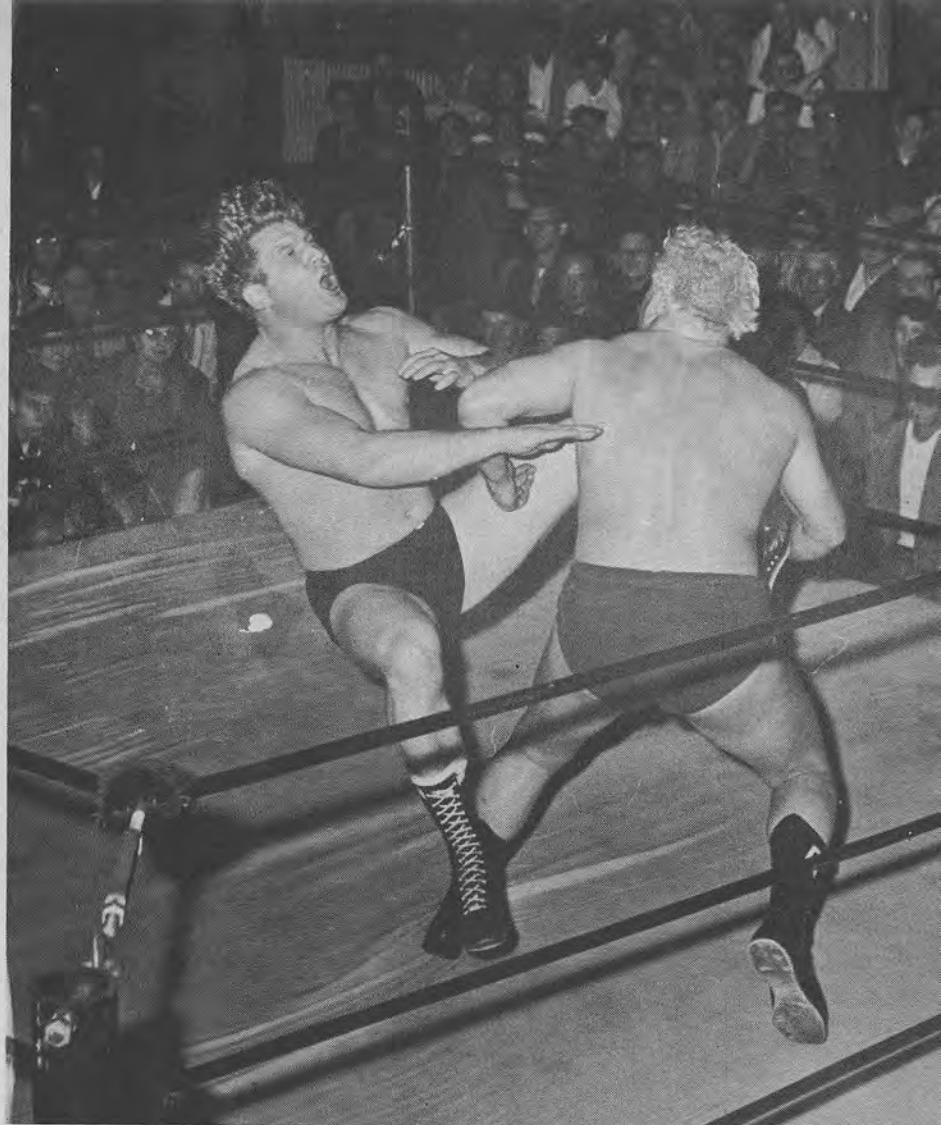
breaking an ankle and putting him out of action for almost three months.

IN ADDITION to being one of the greatest wrestlers of the day (many think Stevens will eventually capture the world championship), Stevens was a champion go-kart driver a few years ago in the Midwest circuit. He has fared much better than average on the cycles and in another pastime, rodeo.

Stevens confided to this writer as we sat in the stands at the Indianapolis track watching practice a few days before the race that he was going to drive some sprint races for Agajanian during the summer and if things went as well as he hoped, he would be at the Speedway next May as a driver.

Those who know Stevens know the burning desire, the will to get anything done that drives him to success. They do not laugh when he mentions such ambitions for it is not beyond the realm of possibility that he will do as he says. For not only does Stevens have a great belief in himself but he has always accomplished what he has set out to do.

The 26-year-old Stevens, who is 5-11 in height and weighs 238 pounds, is one of the few men in wrestling who is not a college graduate. Even though



Popular Red Bastien is on the receiving end as Stevens comes off the ropes



Stevens leans under the bottom rope to choke Indian Wrestler Chief Kit Fox



Emile Dupre is slammed to mat as Stevens delivers a crushing body slam



Stevens roars with laughter during a night club visit where he met his newest girl friend Joan Wyatt. She was a "kitten" and he thought she was as cute as

matches on motorcycles, driving them in the front door of the arena and on into the dressing room. Many nights after wrestling at San Francisco's Cow Palace Stevens and Don Manaukian would take off on their cycles for Reno, Nevada where they would spend the day trying to parlay their Cow Palace payoffs into bigger money.

And more often than not Stevens was successful.

Early last spring Stevens was at Colorado Springs for a few days and he and a group of friends rented motorcycles to tour the famous Garden Of The Gods. They swung over to Pike's Peak, the site of the annual July 4th Hill Climb, and roared up the twisting road. On the way back down Stevens veered from the road right at the timberline and rode his cycle down and through the rocky mountain-side, part of the way bumping along on the cog railway ties.

Frankie Talaber, a veteran wrestler from Columbus, Ohio, tells a tale about Stevens when he was just a rookie, still in his teens.

Talaber and Stevens had been on the same card at Cincinnati and early in the morning Talaber was driving home-ward, half asleep, at about 40 miles an hour when a car came bearing down at him from behind. It slowed and as it passed Talaber he was showered with a deluge of beer cans. He took to the berm at the side of the road and as the other car passed there was Stevens standing upright on the roof throwing the empty cans at Talaber.

This story is a prime example of the guts and determination possessed by Stevens. Talaber estimates the car must have been coming up behind him at 70 miles an hour or better.

HAVE YOU ever tried standing on top of a car that's moving that fast?

Stevens has a philosophy that he follows. As we sat watching Jones and



In order to miss heavy traffic around the Indianapolis Speedway, Stevens hired a helicopter to fly him to the track each day

he never finished high school, he must be regarded as one of the smartest in the sport.

He earns big money (over \$100,000 a year) and he spends big. But he also spends wisely. Currently he is a partner in two businesses—the R & R Earth Movers in Indianapolis and the Grand Prix Auto & Body Shop in Hayward, California. If he had not become a pro

wrestler when he was 15 years old, he could well have been a full-time race driver today.

STEVENS HAS the guts and will do anything, no matter what the risk. One night, as an example, shortly before he was injured in the motorcycle race he and the Alaskan, both on the card at Fresno, California came to the



With the Tower Terrace looming in background, Stevens points to pit area

other drivers roaring around the track at an average of 150 miles an hour, he said that ever since he left the streets of New York every day he told himself:

"A man may fall many times but he's not a failure until he says he was pushed."

It's a matter of record, however, that Stevens has offered alibis for the few

losses he has suffered in the ring. His intensive egotism does not permit him to admit that it might have been his own fault.

He is a fun-loving individual who doesn't care about anything other than racing, wrestling and money. Actually handsome in appearance when dressed up, he always has pretty girls flocking after him. Most of the time he can't be

bothered with their company, chasing them away. But when he sees a girl he especially likes, he turns on the charm and she's a sure conquest.

We have seen him insult any number of beautiful young girls trying to get rid of them. One night at an Indianapolis night club he told a high-priced model, "You're a real, dear. I can hardly wait for the season to open."

Then he followed with, "Get the hell out of here before I kick you through the window."

The bar owner sighed with relief when the girl went back to her own table.

AT OTHER times he has told the girls to "go get a pad somewhere and call me." It's amazing but night after night he would get phone calls at the club where the "kittens" (the waitresses) were instructed to inform anyone phoning that he wasn't there.

Perhaps one reason that Stevens wasn't too interested in the many girls who approached him asking for dates is that he got a crush on one of the "kittens" and when the club closed at 2 every morning he could be seen driving her to a restaurant for an early breakfast.

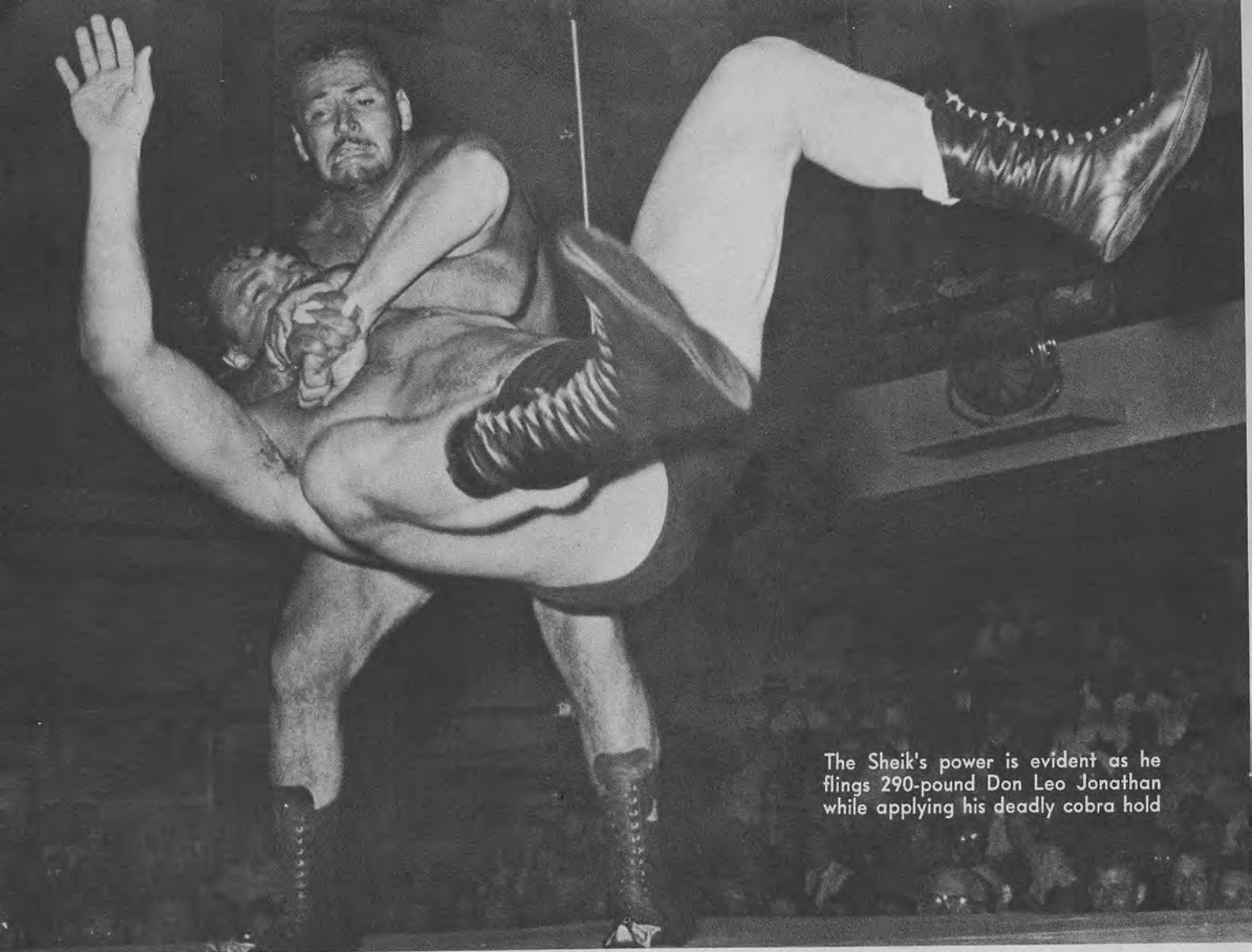
Her name was and is Joan Wyatt but there are a number of people who are betting it will soon be Stevens. Two days after he left Indianapolis she hopped a plane and joined him on the West Coast where he was booked for a week.

Their romance developed to the point where he took her to the track with him during the day and spent the evenings at the club waiting for her to get off. This writer has seen instances like this before.

In the past a month is about as long as Stevens' romances would last. He would develop the same disdain for a girl that he has for his ring foes. There are many girls across the country who today are still broken-hearted from Stevens' brushoffs.

If sometime the tables were turned, so to speak, we pity Stevens' opponents. He'd be twice as maniacal if some of the tricks he has pulled were pulled on him.

★



The Sheik's power is evident as he flings 290-pound Don Leo Jonathan while applying his deadly cobra hold

The Master Without



That is Argentina Rocca who is being slammed toward the mat by the Sheik

Wrestling fans from California to New York, from Chicago to Miami have seen the Sheik in action for better than 10 years.

Until early this year he always had an attendant. But for the last six months he enters the ring by himself, spreads his own prayer rug and bows to Allah before the start of each match. Missing is the ritual of his attendant (the Princess Saa-Lami, Ali Hesson and Bomba) burning the incense and the other duties which his "slave" always performed for the "master."

A few months ago an interview with the Princess was recorded in these pages (August 1962). Around Christmastime I talked with Bomba who,

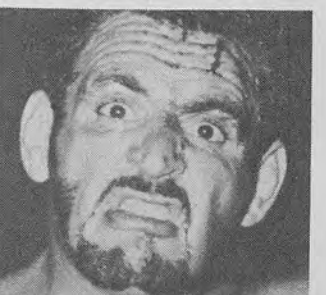
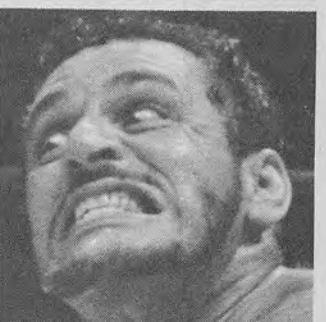
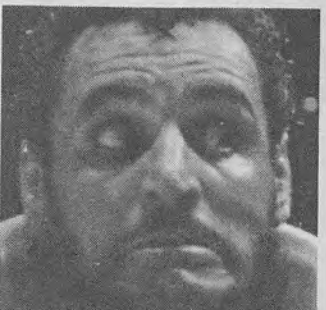
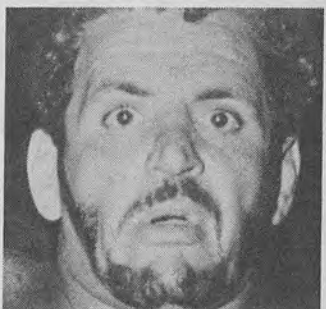
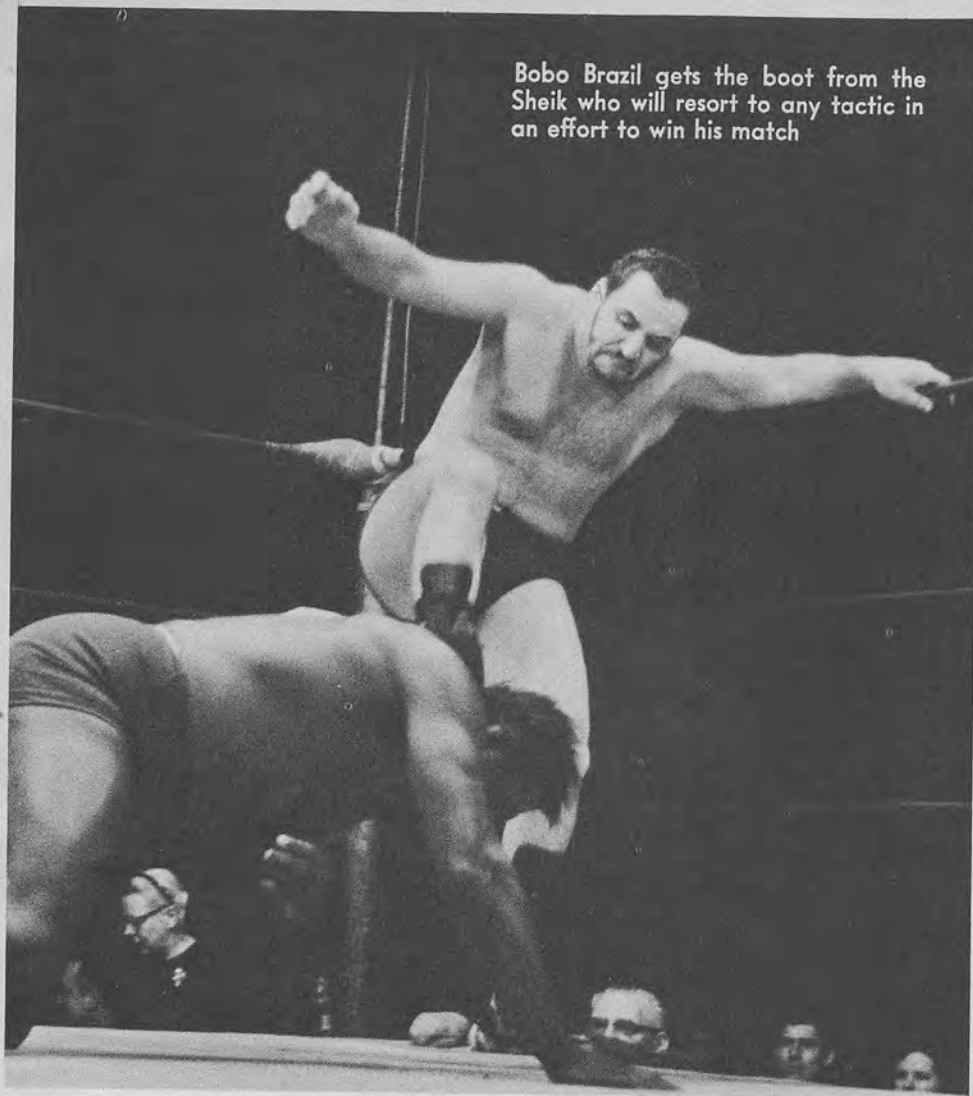
although reluctant at first, gave me the story of what happened to the Princess and why he was serving as the Sheik's attendant.

I later learned that it was due to Bomba's giving me these facts that the Sheik no longer employs him and has decided to "go it alone."

Bomba and I met following matches at the 10,000 seat Indianapolis Coliseum. We were at a jazz spot called the Hub Bub and after a couple of drinks Bomba opened up and talked freely.

AS MOST fans either saw on TV or have read, the Sheik attacked his Princess in the ring last fall. She was knocked unconscious and battered to

Bobo Brazil gets the boot from the Sheik who will resort to any tactic in an effort to win his match



A Slave

BY RAY SELBY

quite an extent before being rescued by Mark Lewin who then spirited her away.

From Lewin we learned the Princess had been secreted in a hospital where she stayed for 10 days, recovering from her injuries. When she was released she begged to be allowed to return to the Sheik.

"He is my man," she claimed, "and always will be, no matter what he does. He has beaten me before, many times, much worse, but I was pledged to him by my father when I was six months old and I will stay with him until my death. I am his and have been since I was 14. I go where he goes. No other man could love me as he does. I will

obey him, serve his every wish. In this country women take too much from their men and give them nothing in return. Please let me return to my master."

Lewin, and others concerned with the affair, reluctantly bowed to her wishes. The next day she joined the Sheik in Omaha and as far as we can ascertain has not been seen since.

From Bomba we learned that the Sheik was far from pleased to see the Princess when she rejoined him. He reports that the Sheik, taking care not to injure her so that she would need further hospital treatment, again attacked her in his hotel room and the following day put her on a plane to



ALI HESSON



THE PRINCESS



BOMBA

send back to his family in Beirut, Lebanon. Bomba claims the Sheik used his fire bolt, which he has often employed in the ring, to put his mark on her back.

SINCE OUR talk with Bomba, this magazine has tried to correspond with the Princess. We have had no reply to three letters.

Bomba admitted that he didn't like being "a madman's slave. I have to cater to all kinds of unreasonable whims.

"The Sheik's out of this world half the time. You've seen him in the ring—well you should see him hypnotize himself while we travel. One night we had a flat tire on the way from Huntington, West Virginia to Cincinnati. He put himself in a trance and held the car up while I changed the tire. I don't think the guy's human."

As far as wrestling fans throughout the country are concerned, that's the understatement of the year.

Actually, the Sheik's trances have been explained by a noted psychiatrist. He called it teleportography.

Whereas mental telepathy is the

transference of thoughts, teleportography is the transference of one's mental being to a spot removed from his physical self.

IN PLAINER English, according to the psychiatrist's analysis, the Sheik, in the height of action in the ring, loses all sense of immediate reality and believes he is back on the desert in his native Syria, taking part in tribal warfare. His mind goes blank to referees, ring, fans, and arena walls. What is real to him is that he is in hand-to-hand combat with a mortal enemy seeking to take control of the tribe he dominates. Even if he is only beaten by his foe, forced to concede, he would lose face to his subjects and lose command.

For years the Far East has had an air of mystery. According to the psychiatrist, the art of teleportography is commonplace in the land of veiled women, silks and incense. It is part and parcel of what novelists have written in stories dealing with the splendor of the mysterious East. Pearl Buck, Lloyd C. Douglas and James Hilton all investigated the mysteries thoroughly before including the "phenomena" as truth in their books.

"The Sheik cannot help himself," claims the psychiatrist. "He is in a trance, a sort of self-willed trance to be sure, and will come out of it only after the action in the ring has ended and he has time to 'cool off' a bit. That is why he appears glassy-eyed and oblivious to the referee and the bell so often long after his opponent has conceded."

CERTAINLY the doctor's analysis is the best diagnosis of the Sheik's action to date. He is a different man at mid-match than when checked prior to his bouts by the state athletic commission physicians.

The Sheik has been called crazy. Others have said that he is influenced by drugs (this has been disproven by commission doctors). There are those who believe he stands in front of a mirror and hypnotizes himself prior to a match.

Although the Sheik is an accomplished wrestler, he uses very few legitimate wrestling holds to subdue his opponents. He is of the "kick 'em, gouge 'em" school and has two pet finishers that he employs when he has his foe



Prior to a television match the Sheik meets famed pianist Liberace. For once the Syrian appeared halfway civilized

worn down—the camel clutch and the cobra hold.

The camel clutch is basically what the desert herders use to bring their camels to a halt—much like reining in a horse. The Sheik, with his foe lying flat on the mat, sits on his back, locks his hands under the hapless victim's chin, and rears back. Either the wrestler or his backbone gives.

The cobra hold is difficult to explain, other than it is a type of sleeper that utilizes the victim's own arm to apply three-way pressure on the carotid arteries, stopping the flow of blood. It was used successfully years ago by Nanjo Singh, a great Hindu grappler who offered \$1,000 to anyone who could break the hold. It was broken only once—by Jim Londos, one of the greatest wrestlers of all time.

FROM TIME to time the Sheik has used another trick derived from the Hindus—the fire bolt.

The Syrian snaps his fingers under his foe's nose and a flame two feet high temporarily blinds his opponent, not to mention singeing his face and hair. It is usually a simple matter for the Sheik to gain a pin, but of course, it's all to no avail as he is disqualified, losing the match and the winner's purse.

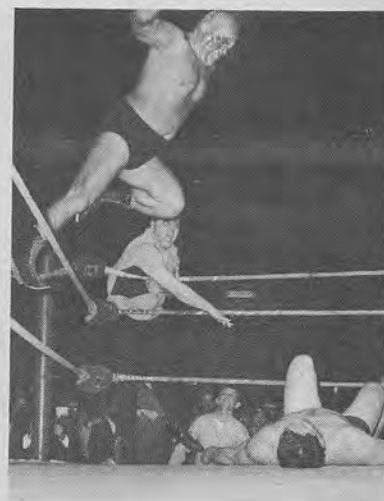
It's been quite a while since the Sheik used the fire bolt. Perhaps he isn't as crazy as it seems for he must have realized that the Hindu truck was costing him money.

And in the long run that probably explains why he now has no attendant. A guy will pay a lot of money to retain someone like the Princess. But Bomba and Hesson—that's a different story!

After all, you can get your shoes shined at any corner barbershop for two bits. ★

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FAN CLUB

CHATTER

By Joan Stuff

Hello friends: It is with great pleasure we bring you all the latest on your favorite wrestlers and their fan clubs.

We hope you will enjoy this column, and will help to make it the largest in wrestling circles. With this, our first gigantic issue of **BIG TIME WRESTLING**, we will be meeting many of you for the first time. Please feel free to drop a line and send the latest from your area.

Unknown to many fans, we have many fine fan clubs for your favorite wrestlers. A fan club is a great way to meet new people, learn all the latest on the honorary of such a club, and perhaps you will even get interested enough to start a club of your own.

The people who have taken over the position as fan club presidents are not just ordinary fans. They are patient, hard working guys and gals who try to boost their favorite to the very top. This means many hard hours of letter writing and contacting all the magazines, always keeping their honorary's name before the public.

The fan club president gets in return the satisfaction of watching the club grow, meeting many new friends, and knowing he played a small part in helping his honorary climb the tall ladder of success.

As we have many clubs to list for you, we will limit this part of the column, to be sure we have the room for all. As I said before, this column will be completely impartial, and I do want to hear from each of you as often as possible.

I would like every fan club president to send me a clear, glossy photo of himself, along with a story, telling how you became interested in wrestling, and how you came to be a fan club president.

I would like to receive a copy of all the fan club bulletins along with a photo of your honorary. Please remember this is your column, and it is up to you to help make it a success. The editors are giving us a chance to use all the material on our honoraries coast to coast. This is a chance we have not had often in the past. I, for one, will back **BIG TIME WRESTLING** all the way, and hope you will too.

Margaret Hall, 89 South Washington, Delaware, Ohio is President of the Buddy Austin Fan Club. We are sure you can't go wrong by belonging to this club. Margaret has been in fan club work for a number of years, and does a terrific job for Buddy's club.

Dennis D. Allen, 1905 Shamrock Lane, Flint 4, Michigan is Prexie of the Percival E. Pringle and the Larry Chene Fan Club. These two mat favorites can be seen around the Michigan area. I have never had the pleasure of seeing Percival in action, but can well remember the exciting matches where Larry usually came out on top. We are sure Dennis is hoping to hear from all of you.

Mike Massey, 3127 Bondesson Street, Omaha 12, Nebraska is the President for the International Robert Durrant Club. Mike's club is just getting a good start, and he

needs all the members possible to help make his club a huge success.

Phyllis Zuver, P. O. Box 148, West Unity, Ohio is President of the King Jack Fan Club. This club has the full co-operation of the honorary. I received a very nice letter from King Jack and he is very proud of his fan club.

Charles Perdew, 965 North Kealing, Indianapolis 1, Indiana has a rough job on his hands. We must admit he is a courageous guy to handle a club for those Canadian Wreckers, the Tolos Brothers. Believe it or not, mean as they are, these fellas have scads of fans. Hope everyone of them belong to the Tolos Brothers fan club.

Margie Evans, 564 Spring Street, Wabash, Indiana is Prexie for the Joe Blanchard fan club. Here is a great guy, too. Really a handsome fellow, Joe has appeared on television not only as a wrestler, but also as commentator for many matches.

Marie Miller, 2602 Arthur Road, Windsor, Ontario, Canada is Prexie of the George and Sandy Scott fan club. Dues are \$1 for a lifetime membership. With full co-operation of her two honoraries, Marie has put out a terrific bulletin. Do hope (if you haven't already jumped on the Scott Brothers bandwagon) you will contact Marie right away.

Eleanor Worthington, 4721 $\frac{1}{2}$ Park Place, Springfield, Ohio is President of the Battlin' Benny Jarrels club. Eleanor wants everyone to pass the word of her club to those who haven't heard about it.

Betty Von Hagel, 3746 South New Jersey Street, Indianapolis, Indiana is Prexie of the Cowboy Bob Ellis fan club. Here is a terrific gal, with a very popular honorary. I am sure there are many Ellis fans who have been waiting to join this club.

Karen Henderson, 3555 Washington Street, Jamaica Plain 30, Massachusetts is President of the All Stars Fan Club. This is a club to honor all the big time pro wrestlers. I really found this a very active and interesting club. Karen is doing a terrific job.

Fred G. Carveth, 1260 Kingston Road, Scarborough, Ontario, Canada is President of the Ilio Di Paolo fan club. We have seen Ilio in action a number of times. Never a dull moment in a match when he is in it. Fred has been very successful with this club, and I would like to commend him for a job well done.

Barbara Prentice, 1875 University Avenue, Bronx 53, New York, President of the Universal Edouard Carpentier Fan Club, wants to hear from all the Carpentier fans.

Wally Chaplin, 802 West Ilderech, Springfield 3, Missouri is Prexie of the "Irish" Mike Clancy club. Dues are 75 cents per year, and you get scads of material, including four bulletins.

Evelyn Davies, 41 West 1st Street, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada has the Whipper Billy Watson Fan Club . . . This

Fan Club President of the Month

Born in Michigan January 7, 1927 as Zova Velga Stillwell (and always gone by the nickname of Betty), this gal has



MRS. BETTY CLARK
Fan Club President

done a great job in everything she partakes. Betty was married at the age of 14 and has four children; Kenneth Jr. 20, Barbara 19, William 17, and Shirley 15. After Shirley was born Betty returned to school and received her high school diploma. She was planning to go into police work but candidates had to stand at least 5-6 and Betty was only 5-2. Turning to an entirely different career, she put in

three years in nursing school and she now works in an emergency room as the head floor nurse. She is working on her degree in psychology.

Betty is a great niece to General Joseph Stillwell of World War 2. Her sons are interested in wrestling as well. Having wrestled in school William became so good that there wasn't anyone left for him to defeat. He will be attending a pro wrestling school this fall to become a pro wrestler. Kenneth wrestled in school and still wrestles in the Navy.

One night while attending a match in Detroit, Betty saw Wilbur Snyder wrestle Dick The Bruiser. It was then she made her mind up to have a fan club for Wilbur.

With the help of Violet Smith, who had a club for Wilbur in the past, Betty organized the new and only International Wilbur Snyder club. Betty says she loves every minute of the work on her club and will have the club until Wilbur decides to retire.

She considers it a great honor to be Prexie for Wilbur's club and she said the same goes for the Chuck Campbell club of which she is also President. Betty says she feels she has the two nicest men that any one would care to know as her honoraries.

We are very pleased to give you this sketch on Betty. She has done a lot of hard work for her honoraries, and she can well be proud of the results. ★

is one of the older clubs and Evelyn has done a terrific job with it. Do hope you will drop her a line soon. Know you will like the club bulletins.

Tom Hankins, 1140 J Avenue North West, Cedar Rapids, Iowa has been doing a terrific job with his two fan clubs. One is for the ever popular Pat O'Connor, while the other, the Pro Wrestling Fan Club, is for all the wrestlers. Tom says he has room for many more members in both clubs.

Jane Rhodes, 2733 Church Avenue, Brooklyn, New York is Prexie for the Eddie Graham Fan Club. Jane also has the Universal Tony Manousos Fan Club. This is a big job, as I have said before, and we certainly commend Jane for a job well done.

David Thompson, Star-Route, Lebanon, Kentucky is Prexie of the Dorothy Carter Fan Club. This is a very popular gal, and he has a great club.

Mrs. Violet Smith, Box 54, Meadow Lands, Pennsylvania is President of the Judy Grable Fan Club. This club is bound to be a success as Violet has been in fan club work for some time now. So why not drop her a line now!

Connie Pflug, Box 384, Lake Alfred, Florida is President of the Jerry Christy Fan Club. It has been about five years since we had the pleasure of seeing Jerry, but I am sure he has come a long way to the top. Do know he has a great club in his honor.

Robert Phillips, 919 Grand Avenue, Cincinnati 5, Ohio is Prexie of the Handsome Johnny Barend and Magnificent Maurice Fan Club. This guy really has his hands full. We have met both Johnny and Maurice, and if Robert can keep up with these two, he really has to keep jumping. Know many of you will want to jump on the bandwagon, too.

Joseph Cusano, 6 Peck Street, New Haven, Connecticut is President of the Jerry and Bobby Colt club. Here is another club that is reaching the top in wrestling circles.

Harvey Alperin, 1235 Knox Avenue North, Minneapolis 11, Minnesota is Prexie of the Championship Wrestling Fan Club. Dues are 90 cents a year, or \$2 for life. This club honors all pro wrestlers.

Georgiann Mastis, 32-18 34th Street, Astoria 6, New

FAN'S PHOTO



This picture of Al Lovelock choking referee Leo Ross after losing a bout to Ed Sharpe was taken by Wally Chaplin of Springfield, Missouri with a Brownie Starmeter. Readers are invited to try for the \$5 prize given by Big Time Wrestling for the best amateur photo submitted with the BTW staff acting as judges. Pictures will be returned if accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope.

York is President of the Buddy "Nature Boy" Rogers fan club. We understand this club is a few months old, but growing steadily. I am sure Georgiann would like to hear from all you Rogers fans.

Bob Klinger, 812 North Howard Avenue, and Ron Hennes, 1017 Scheffer Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota are co-Presidents of the Verne Gagne Fan Club. Dues are \$1 for six months. This is a fast growing club, and we are sure you will want to be in on all the fun.

Tommy Bore, 127 Grant Street, Portland, Maine is President of the Dory Dixon club. Here is a strong guy. Enjoy watching his many exciting matches.

Jean Pierce, 2338 May Street, Cincinnati 6, Ohio is President of the Les Thatcher Fan Club. We recently saw Les in person for the first time. Here is a real talented guy, and we are sure he will go far in wrestling circles. Jean has been in fan club work for many years, and is a good friend. We know you can't go wrong by contacting her.

Karen James, 3308 Irving Avenue South, Minneapolis 8, Minnesota is President for the Moose Evans Fan Club. Here is a handsome guy. We have seen him take on two wrestlers at one time, defeating both. Be sure to contact Karen. Know she will be happy to hear from you Moose Evans fans.

Vi Reuther, 142 McClean Avenue, Yonkers, New York is President of the Bobby Davis, Fran Gravette, and Tony Marino fan clubs. Vi is doing a terrific job with all three of her clubs. I know the work involved, and feel she can really be proud.

Donna L. Wolfe, 472 Park Place, Springfield, Ohio is the President of the Jim Grabmire club. Donna took this club over when Mary Hasley retired from wrestling circles. We recently talked with Jim in Cincinnati and he said all was well with him, and he is really a nice fella.

Richard Branciforte, 80-21 168th Street, Jamaica, New York is President of the International Wrestling Alliance Fan Club. Dues are \$1 for a lifetime membership. Richard would like to hear from all wrestling fans, and will answer any questions you may have.

Sue Ellis, 217 Screven Avenue, Savannah, Georgia is President of the Chief Little Eagle Club. This is another guy that has many fans, and I hope you are all members of the club.

Linda Rebischke, 949 Euclid Street, St. Paul 6, Minnesota has the Eddie Sharkey fan club. Dues are \$1, and you receive loads of material. Eddie is a newcomer from California. Let's all help Linda give her club a boost.

Olga Chavez, 979 Hillside Boulevard, Daly City, California is starting a new club for Pepper Gomez. Olga received the permission and full co-operation of Pepper.

As many of you know, beside writing this column, I also am President for the Miller Brothers Fan Club, honoring Bill and Dan Miller. The dues are \$1. I hope any of the Millers fans will feel free to join us. We certainly would like to have you with us.

Address all mail to:

Joan Stuff, Box 1571, Mansfield, Ohio.

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Hither & Yon Roundup...

It isn't often a rain storm in Indianapolis disturbs wrestling fans in Atlanta, Georgia, but it happened June 7th. More than 8,000 Atlanta fans turned out to see a match between Dick the Bruiser and World Champion Lou Thesz. Bruiser couldn't make it. A flash flood in Indianapolis grounded all planes and Bruiser along with them. Tarzan Tyler substituted and was beaten by the champion, but it was little consolation to the fans keyed to see a Bruiser-Thesz match. . . . Thesz is having his troubles in Atlanta, first having the Bruiser match cancelled and a week later retaining his championship, though knocked out, against Ray Gunkel. Both hit the concrete outside the ring and were knocked unconscious. . . . Tito Montez won a trophy as the most popular wrestler in Phoenix, Arizona with Danny Hodge a close second. Currently a "best physique" contest is underway. . . . Don Kent is Arizona State champion after winning a tournament. Along with the crown went \$3,600.

Don Leo Jonathan has adopted a new occupation—doing TV commercials along the West Coast. . . . Omaha crowds are down, despite top wrestling names. Joe Dusek, promoter, deserves a better break. He goes all out to give Nebraska fans the best. . . . Japanese karate expert Hideki Fuji Tanaka is amazing fans with his exhibitions, breaking bricks and boards with his judo chop. . . . There's a real feud brewing between Sonny Myers and Ripper Collins after the two traded blows near the dressing rooms in Waterloo, Iowa. Myers, returning to the showers after the match, didn't care for the heckling handed out by Collins. It took several policemen to break it up after Collins threw a set of temporary steps at Sonny. Earlier, Collins had lost to 49-year-old Bulldog Henning in 21 seconds.

Eddie Graham wrestled Hiro Matsuda in Orlando, Florida in a strange bout. Matsuda was allowed to use karate and Graham his bare fists. Graham was the winner when he tossed Matsuda through the ropes, then delivered a knee drop all the way from the top rope to the floor alongside the ring. Needless to say, the Jap wasn't ready to return at the 20 count. . . . Verne Gagne holds at least a tie for the shortest match in history—no time at all. His opponent, Larry Hennig, attacked him as he was crawling through the ropes prior to the start of the match and refused to allow Gagne into the ring. Hennig was disqualified before the bell rang. . . . Dick the Bruiser is again teaming with his cousin, Crusher Lisowski, in tag matches.

Johnny Valentine used a broken hand as a weapon at Maple Leaf Gardens in Toronto. He used it as a club in pounding John Paul Henning to the canvas. . . . The Great Mortier and Bruno Summartino decided on Indian wrestling in Pittsburgh to decide who was stronger. It didn't work because Red Berry's assisting Mortier with leverage by bracing his foot enraged Bruno, who punched the Great One, then slammed him to the floor. . . . Rip Tyler has gone to Atlanta, Georgia to join his brother, Tarzan, as a tag team. . . . Verne Gagne protested a referee's decision that awarded a Minneapolis match to Crusher Lisowski, but Promoter Wally Karbo said the decision will stand. Lisowski got a big assist from the Bruiser.

In Washington, D. C. they're having an elimination tournament with the winner to receive a trophy and shot at Bruno Sammartino. . . . Bobo Brazil and Dory Dixon are being billed as Maryland state tag team champions. . . . Edouard Carpentier wasn't as badly hurt in that car accident early in the summer as at first thought. . . . A Waterloo, Iowa woman came up with the answer to keeping the identical Masked Medics from illegally switching off. She marked one with lipstick across his back. . . . Bummy Rogers, Dory Nixon and Brute Mainard were some of the names on one of Tony Santos' Boston Arena cards. At Chicago Jack Pfefer featured such as Bruno Nasartino, Jumping Rococo and Slugger Kowalski. Wow!

★

MEMORY
LANIE



DICK RAINES

PHOTO ALBUM



★ EDDIE GRAHAM ★